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COLLEGE ENGLISH

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A SCENE OF CONFUSION

HARLAN HATCHER¹

A few periods in literary history have had the good fortune to be labeled "golden." The men who created the literature in those periods were no doubt great in themselves as men and artists and might have been great in any age. But they were also enlarged by being a part of an atmosphere, a rhythm of the time, which made them greater than themselves. They were freely, usually happily, integrated with the genius of their age and were exalted by it while they helped to create it. The astonishing outpouring of literature in England in the 1590's, in America in Emerson's lifetime, are notable instances. In each such period, too, a few men have risen high enough to dominate it and define its character. Thomas Mann has for several years been writing his Joseph story around the central concept that man is implemented into greatness by identifying himself with the greatness of his age, by being absorbed into the tribal mythos or actually becoming the myth, like Joseph, Moses, Cleopatra, or, we might add, Abraham Lincoln.

In other times, on the contrary, men have been beaten upon by their age, dis-

persed, hampered, and pulled apart by its dissonances. Instead of being harmoniously enlarged by their period, they have found themselves homeless, unanchored, and either bewildered or used up in conflict. They have been unable either to dominate the disintegration or to pull together and give meaning to the chaos around them. The suicides of Ernest Toller and Stefan Zweig, or the political contrasts between Coolidge and Hoover, are also notable instances.

Our immediate period is not golden with assurance but leaden with uncertainty. No single figure or group of figures exercises authority over the literary scene today. No movement holds it together. No certain vision inspires it. No enthusiasm makes it glow with the divine fire. No irresistible forward drive, no intoxicating rhythm, sweeps our writers into a compact front. There is confusion in the little isle.

The deaths of James Joyce and of Virginia Woolf in 1941 were a symbol and a portent. We need not here and now enter the controversy over the merits of these two figures. We may simply content ourselves with the objective facts and make the statement that they were literary figures of great proportion in the years between the wars, and that they

¹ Professor of English in Ohio State University; author of *Creating the Modern American Novel* and of several novels.

defined a method, a form, a concept of literature, and an interpretation of life that had a profound influence on world literature. In a fashion they summed up a significant aspect of an era that was confident and preoccupied with self in an age of drift and general chaos. When Norway was invaded, when the Germans occupied Paris, when they entered the village near Vichy where he had been living, Joyce was more concerned over getting a copy of a book by Conrad Aiken than with the collapse of a world and an age for which he had been one of the chief spokesmen. He did not survive the catastrophe. The publication of *Finnegans Wake*, that end point in Joyce's career and the *reductio ad absurdum* of an era, fell just halfway between Munich and the invasion of Poland. And Virginia Woolf, distraught by the nervous tensions of World War II like her own Septimus Warren Smith of World War I, drowned herself in the River Ouse. Joyce and Mrs. Woolf are but two painfully dramatic casualties of an age that lost its way and went to pieces.

Where are the men whose names flashed so large in such brilliance in that period of James Joyce and Virginia Woolf? The fate of intellectual Europe needs only to be mentioned to be wept over. The writers who did not perish are in prison camps, in war service, or in exile. They are uprooted and addled. They are trying to understand just what evil thing stalked them through the night and attacked them before morning. They are a subject for a full discourse and analysis all to themselves. We refer to them briefly as still another example of men who lost their way and their world and were thrown into discord and panic.

Thomas Mann is their most distinguished representative among us. How hollow now rings the once-famous cur-

tain line in his Nobel Prize novel, *The Magic Mountain*: "Out of this universal feast of death, out of this extremity of fever, kindling the rain-washed evening sky to a fiery glow, may it be that Love one day shall mount?" And that feast of death, we remind ourselves, was World War I, not the fall of France or the bombing of Britain. The great artist who penned the sentiment and the monumental novel of which it is the conclusion is giving belated and somewhat pathetic lectures in America on democracy; he is lost in the Freudian labyrinths of his incomplete Joseph story and is refreshing himself with psychological novels about Werther and Charlotte in their old age. It is an example of confusion, not a way out; it is dispersal, not integration. Mann is not his own Joseph becoming great by identifying himself with his myth and his time; he is Pharaoh himself in the countercurrent of the Red Sea.

Eugene O'Neill was a dominant name in the pre-Munich world. He was so much a part of the turbulent but cohesive and infectious post-war era that his decade of silence and withdrawal has become emphatic. He is known to have been at work on a cycle of plays dealing with the making of America; presumably these dramas will eventually be performed. Yet, is it not significant that the dramatist who reached the whole literate world with plays that electrified that world a few years ago should have nothing to say during one of the most needy and desperate periods in our entire history? T. S. Eliot, of *Waste Land* fame, predicted that the world would end "not with a bang but a whimper." He was wrong. The explosion buried O'Neill, and though he may arise phoenix-like from the rubble, the Nobel award was a monument as well as a recognition.

It is not otherwise with Sinclair Lewis.

He rode on the rhythm of his time into a fame that was greater than the man alone. People nodded their heads in recognition if not in approval of his orchestration. Without a proper timing, without the subtle support of the pervasive atmosphere of a public mood, the novels of Sinclair Lewis might have fallen on stony ground. But they coincided with the mythos of which they also sang. And when Pearl S. Buck, after polling the literary critics of the nation, compiled a list of fifteen books that would best interpret America to the Orient, she included two novels by Lewis—*Main Street* and *Arrowsmith*. They are homogeneous, and the only novels on the list representing the 1920's. We observe, in contrast, that the three novels recommended from the ten thousand published since 1930 were Ruth Suckow's *The Folks*, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings' *The Yearling*, and John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*. The selection is more arbitrary. We wonder what impression they will convey to readers in the Far East. Compared to the deep and sharp imprint left by Lewis' novels, they are partial and dispersed. With the possible exception of *The Grapes of Wrath*, which rode the flood tide of social protest in the decade of the 1930's, they are tenuously related to their times; and they underscore the confusion and lack of direction in recent fiction.

We might go on through the list in America or in England. The result would be much the same. Dos Passos, for example, held a wide audience in the twenties and early thirties. He was an influence as well as a pivotal center for fiction of a leftist slant and an experimental form. Professor Beach found his work so important that he gave two complete chapters to it in *The Twentieth Century Novel*. Professor Beach might now consider this

allotment excessive and out of scale, but it did not seem so in 1932. Like Lewis, Dos Passos was enhanced by the decade in which his work was significant. It was indignant against maladjustments, sympathetic with the exploited. Its reference point of values was the capacity and the dignity of the common man, the very things that first went down in the wreckage of the past few years. Dos Passos has not been able to create against the countercurrent or even to hold his place in the changing scene. William Faulkner's work has grown more and more confused, lacking even the saving stability of style that distinguished his first novels. Hemingway attained dignity and high emotion in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* under the inspiration of the Spanish tragedy. We would not for a moment detract from the strength of that achievement or from the exalted picture it draws of a kind of victory in defeat through human courage and love and faith. But it is a foredoomed and fatalistic courage at best, not the winding of Roland's horn at Roncevaux or the inspired harbingers of a new order singing the "Marseillaise."

In England the confusion is worse even than here. Galsworthy founded no school. Shortly after his death his influence over the younger men deteriorated rapidly. It became fashionable at Oxford in the mid-thirties to speak lightly of him and to treat him as a museum piece of a belated Victorianism. Shaw is an object of wonder among the younger men without much historical perspective. They wonder how their fathers ever regarded him as a spokesman for an advanced and daring age. D. H. Lawrence has held on in a small circle for a few highly personal expressions such as that in *Sons and Lovers*. But he is clinical and unsocial. He has had no followers, and it is clear that he himself was augmented by the

ramified movement stemming out of Freudianism to which at his best he gave authentic expression. But if he or another like him should appear now with such material and such a style, he would not be tolerated by present-day readers, as one of their best spokesmen, Mr. Cyril Connolly, has emphatically declared.

In fact, after Mr. Connolly finished calling the roll in his native islands in *Enemies of Promise*, only E. M. Forster had survived the vicissitudes and confusion of a destructive age. No new men have risen in England to take the place of those whom the age has cast off or left behind. But they have been confused even longer than we because they have lived nearer the infected and spreading area of the sick world. Young Englishmen have had the premonition for years that they would end their days on the battlefields of Europe which they saw being prepared for them and which they were powerless or too paralyzed to prevent. Long before Munich they were saying: What is the use of hewing out a style or sweating for art? We haven't time. You in America may enjoy such luxury. We in England will be lucky to get anything at all said before the cataclysm. Connolly recognized this stultifying dilemma. England was trying to keep out of war; but to do that "it is necessary to avoid the role of the good Samaritan." Writing in the spring of 1939, he said:

It is a humiliating position for idealists, to have to do without their ideals, and support a cynical policy in which they do not believe. They therefore cannot be said to remain spiritually alive, and this difficulty of choosing between the danger of war and physical extermination, and the dangers of an ostrich peace and spiritual stagnation, between physical death and moral death, is another predicament.²

² *Enemies of Promise* (Little, Brown & Co., 1939), p. 6.

They have been torn apart, dispersed, and forced to waste themselves in finding a way through this troubled age, instead of drawing strength and greatness from unity with it.

The best analysis of this state of mind, which has thrown literature along with everything else into confusion, is to be found in Raoul de Roussy de Sales's *The Making of Tomorrow*. It states, as clearly as any single book has yet stated it, the temper of this immediate time, the wave of the present that finds men joyless, uninspired, and reluctant to take up the evil conflict. "The contemporary man may not know how to improve his spiritual, economic, and social conditions in time of peace, but he senses that peace is the prerequisite condition for any approach to the problems which confront him." Against this conviction is set the stern and contemptuous challenge of Goering to Sir Neville Henderson when he said that "the British had to be 'brutalized' to survive."

The alternative is obnoxious. Our somewhat unconscious rebellion against the necessity of the times, the positive conviction that lay at the base of all our writings between the wars—that war was unmitigated evil, totally destructive, ruinous to victor and vanquished alike—has left us bewildered, at least temporarily, uncertain of our way, and inhibited in our action. After more than three years of war, and one full year for America, we have no song to sing. Hundreds have been written, and every one of them has been perfunctory, hollow, untouched by conviction or sincerity, as unmoving as a radio announcer asking us to remember Pearl Harbor. We are grim, unhappy, reluctant but determined, and as yet unswept by anything that has compelled us into an integrated, irresistible wave of the future.

These discords of our time have thrown the world into confusion and put a strain upon our resiliency and our central vision. We had not yet recovered from the ambiguity of the depression years of too much leisure and overabundance when we were confronted with a boom without precedent, dwindling manpower, underproduction, and war. There was an unsettling tragic irony, after our long and well-nigh desperate attempts to remain out of the conflict, in the fact that when we did enter it we went in through the Pacific and through the Philippines, from which we were to withdraw in 1945. We were forced to take up arms to recover what we had already in principle renounced. The entire war has been confused with such ironies, of which Finland and Russia are only the more emphatic. In short, the disjointed times have left us perplexed and indecisive; and all this has had its effect upon letters.

It becomes quite understandable why the war, after nearly four years, has produced no compelling novel, no reflective nonfiction of outstanding quality except *The Making of Tomorrow*, a book which analyzes our distress over the discrepancy between our purposes and our practical measures to achieve them; it is understandable why it has produced no poetry to move us, not even on the level of "Flanders Fields." The late young John Magee's fine sonnet, "High Flight," has made a strong appeal, somewhat comparable to that of Rupert Brooke; but it is a poem about the sensation of flight, not about the world in conflict which killed Magee in England in 1941 at the age of nineteen. All its memorable lines and phrases, "Up, up, the long delirious, burning blue," "The high untrespassed sanctity of space," might have been written at any time these last twenty years. It sings of the joyous sensation

of flinging "My eager craft through footless halls of air"; it leaves unsung the most frightful horror and perversion of all time—the use of such eager craft, not to "put out my hand" and touch "the face of God," but to explode young men to death out of the clouds and to rain devastation upon the face of the earth below. Against the perspective of 1940-42, "High Flight" is empty and heartbreaking—not the poem of our time. It adds to the confusion instead of resolving it.

On the whole, fiction has been inferior to straight reporting and has suffered in the competition. I do not mean the Berlin and Moscow diaries or the "inside-Europe" books which characterized the first phase of the war, but the second phase of reporting the disasters for which our minds were essentially unprepared. St. John's *From the Land of Silent People* is at least a formidable rival of Aldridge's *Signed with Their Honour*, a story about the calamity in Greece which parallels the former in fiction. Marsman's *I Escaped from Hong Kong* may not be a work of art, like Pearl S. Buck's *Dragon Seed*, but it is more overwhelming in its story of the brutal nature of these times in the Far East. White's *They Were Expendable*, with its eye-witness epic grandeur, makes Steinbeck's *The Moon Is Down* read like a literary exercise from the garret of a poet trafficking in dreams. Shute's *Pied Piper* must yield before Habe's *A Thousand Shall Fall* as a picture of fallen France. Again we observe that these are reports of the confusion into which the world is plunged, not the sure golden road into order. These are records of isolated moments of individual bravery and heroism as great as any in recorded history or legend, but they are still isolated and separate, not woven into or enhanced by the rhythm of the times.

The drama, which should be keyed to the times and the most forceful expression of the times, was never, on the whole, so barren, so unelectrifying, or so wayward. Odets, who loomed up at the center of the depression movement with *Awake and Sing!* and *Paradise Lost*, was lost in the blind alley of *Rocket to the Moon* and *Clash by Night*. The dramatists could not even hear the new rhythms of the post-Munich world. Noel Coward offered *Blithe Spirit*. But we had better not depress ourselves unnecessarily by running through the dramatic scene of recent seasons. *The Wookey* almost caught and reinforced an authoritative vision for bewildered men, but it was really only defiance and endurance. *Watch on the Rhine* almost achieved it, too, and had a long run to show that people were seeking to know and understand the hope under the boot of evil. But Maxwell Anderson missed it in *Candle in the Wind*, and the final irony was offered by Robert Sherwood when he withdrew his brave statement in *There Shall Be No Night* because night had come over the Finland that had inspired it.

The novel is not particularly rich, either, but its pulse is stronger than that of the drama. It, too, reflects the absence of certitude. We have a procession of names and a flux of books, not a well-defined movement with a few giants to give it stature and a group of good craftsmen to support it, both linked to the mood of the times and drawing strength therefrom. Fiction, by its very nature, must in general remain fairly near to the scene which it pictures and interprets. The most significant elements in that scene are the gropings and hesitations of a startled people. Perhaps it is asking too much of the novelists, therefore, to be wiser than statesmen, more spiritual than the shattered church, more far-seeing

than the commanders of the armed forces. It is not possible to conclude precisely to what extent the novelists create a coherent era or to what degree they only reflect it. It does not definitely exist until it has been properly expressed, but it cannot be expressed until it does exist, or is ready to be precipitated.

In the absence of larger and more central themes and moods, the novelists have developed a new regionalism closely connected with the extended vogue of the historical novel that has lasted for more than a decade. Both lend themselves to a variety of treatments, both offer escape from insoluble questions of global magnitude, both encourage the limited talent that is so well distributed in the nation, and both lend themselves to the exploration and rediscovery of the homeland that comes nearer than any other theme to reaching the proportions of an elevating movement among us. It is well-nigh impossible to get the stresses and strains of America as a whole into a novel or into any book. It is possible to report on the nature of life and recipes at *Cross Creek*, the monotonous details of the comings and goings of *The Folks*, the tribulations of the dispossessed in *The Grapes of Wrath*, the love of place in *Windswept*; the singularities and occasional glimpses of the universal in novels by James Still, Jesse Stuart, James Street, and a score of such gifted writers; the separatist colors of New England, the Deep South, the Old Southwest, or of the Swedes in Minnesota, the Italians in New York, the Mormons in Utah. It is also possible to reconstruct stirring or idyllic or tragic or merely diverting eras of the past and to give them new interest or meaning by emphasizing their contrasts or similarities in the light of present experience.

A writer of talent can do one or two respectable books on these subjects without stamping his image upon his age, and scores of them have done so and are doing so. The unifying figure who can name the age with a "Main Street" or a "Forsyte" is not in evidence, and he cannot emerge without partaking of a com-

elling mythos greater than himself. The mythos may be taking form, but it is confused, its shape is still illusive, and we cannot be sure of the mask it wears.

(The lengthened shadow of a man
Is history, said Emerson
Who had not seen the silhouette
Of Sweeney straddled in the sun.)

THE CENTRAL PROBLEM IN LITERARY CRITICISM¹

THEODORE SPENCER²

To define the central problem in literary criticism is not easy. When the critic is doing his job in the right way, he is performing a very elaborate act, which is important as a total act, so that it is in a sense false to say that any one part of it is more central than another. It is necessary to point this out at the beginning. For what is a man doing when he starts out in his task of literary criticism? Among other things he is doing the following:

1. He is trying to understand what the author says—in itself a very complicated business.
2. He is considering the form in which the author is saying it.
3. He is trying to distinguish between what is essential and what is nonessential in the author's presentation of his subject.
4. He is relating what the author says to his own experience of life.
5. He is comparing the author's success in carrying out his aims with the success of other authors in carrying out similar aims.
6. He is undergoing, or failing to undergo, a set of emotional and intellectual experiences which give him what he calls, for lack of a better word, enjoyment. And this enjoyment, while it includes the operations which

I have just mentioned, is something more, and something different, from the sum of their parts.

Which of these activities is the essential one? On which should we concentrate if we are to discuss the central problem of criticism?

The first thing we must do, if we are to answer this question, is to make an artificial distinction, which, in spite of its artificiality, is nevertheless both valid and essential. We must distinguish between the work of art and our own response to it. We must first look at the work objectively, as something with an order of its own, and as an example, even, of certain principles of construction. We must first treat it, in other words, as Aristotle treated tragedy—we must ask ourselves to what class of work this particular work belongs, we must understand the relation of one part to another, we must understand the particular kind of structural organism of which it is an example. We must, as Arnold says, see the thing as it really is. Only later should we discuss our responses to it.

Most teachers of literature will disagree with this. They will use a lot of hard words like "formalism," "frigidity," "academic," and "pedantic," and

¹ An address delivered to the New England Association of Teachers of English, November, 1941.

² Poet and associate professor of English, Harvard University; author of *Shakespeare and the Nature of Man*.

they will say that to approach literature from the formal side is to kill appreciation, is to look at literature from the wrong angle, and that, even if a mature critic likes to imitate Aristotle, it will not work with students. Literature, they will say, is something to be felt, not something to be analyzed and hence killed.

There is, of course, some truth in those objections, and I would agree that unless some kind of initial pleasure is found in a work of art, there is little point in analysis. There is no use taking an automobile apart and putting it together again unless you are going to get the fun of riding in it. But, on the other hand, if mere undefined enjoyment is what is aimed at, then distinctions break down and criticism becomes impossible. The first problem that the artist himself is compelled to face in creation is the problem of form; the critic, who is a follower of the artist, should begin at the same place.

This has been easier in some generations than it has in others. In the eighteenth century, when certain recognized forms were in vogue and each kind of art had its own decorum (as life itself was supposed to have decorum), it was much easier to begin the critical act with a discussion of artistic form. At the present time experimentation has made form an individual matter, and, confronted with an enormous variety, the critic has great difficulty both in finding general principles and in using those principles in the discussion of an individual work. Many artists of the past generation have given critics an inferiority complex, so that too many false judgments have been made. The critic is so afraid of misunderstanding the artist's intention that he attributes more intention to a given work than the artist originally had in mind. The result has been a great deal of critical

confusion, as the present state of American criticism only too clearly shows. For the critics have themselves been experimenting and have piled up all kinds of individual vocabularies and private critical terms to explain phenomena which in happier, less Alexandrian generations could be analyzed in a less individual fashion.

That is one reason why the critic, starting out with his analysis of form, should have more than the individual form of the particular work he is criticizing in mind. Classification is the beginning of thought, in criticism as in everything else, and no critic has given himself the right kind of training unless he has seriously discussed with himself the different classes and types of literature. That is why he must return again and again to Aristotle, not only because of what Aristotle says about a particular form, but because Aristotle's method is the most fruitful method yet devised for showing what the critic's business should be in distinguishing between what is essential and what is accidental in a given artistic form.

If he reads Aristotle correctly he will see that Aristotle does two things: he describes and he defines. There is a fundamental difference between these activities, and it is usually possible to separate the first-class critic from the second-class according to which activity he emphasizes. The second-class critic generally confines himself to description, and, though he is performing a useful function, and frequently acts as an invaluable intermediary between the work of art and the reader, he does not get at the core of the problem, which is the discovery of universals.

And that—for I have come to it at last—is the heart of our problem. How, in the morass of relativism, of impres-

sionism, of individual response, are we to discover and define those principles of form which underlie works of literature? It will not do to deny their existence; to say that each work of art has its own laws, is the product of a particular set of circumstances—economic, social, or religious—and is the creation of a particular and unique individual. We cannot dismiss these things, of course—in fact, it would be fatal to do so, but it is even more fatal not to go beyond them. If, for example, we are considering the novel, we must begin with a large range of apparently diverse material, which includes *Don Quixote* and *Tristram Shandy*, *Martin Chuzzlewit* and *Ulysses*; it is a literary form which employs a large number of different technical devices and is the reflection of a great variety of individual temperaments. The descriptive critic should rightly be concerned with exploring such matters, with trying to understand what each author was trying to do, and with showing how he accomplished it. But the critic who is really doing his job must, when considering any one of these novels, keep in mind what all of them have in common; he must, like Aristotle, define as well as describe. If he has meditated on the subject sufficiently, he will have discovered for himself a set of general principles, similar to Aristotle's definition of tragedy, which will enable him to criticize any individual work with some pretensions to authority. He will no longer be merely an impressionist but will be able to examine the particular novel with that kind of objective attention which it is the primary function of the critic to employ.

I do not mean to suggest by this a merely authoritarian attitude, or to say that the critic should build a Procrustes bed and fit every work of art into it whether it is the right size or not. My

point is simply this: I believe that intelligent human beings, trained along the same lines, have enough in common so that when two of them meditate seriously on the fundamental characteristics of a given set of phenomena they will arrive at similar conclusions. If the object to be studied is the novel, certain universals will be agreed upon; and these are the bases of criticism.

But criticism cannot stop with the discussion of form. Literature, to use Mr. I. A. Richards' phrase, "is a store house of recorded values," and the problem of values, the content which the form shapes, can never be separated from any critical discussion. And, since we are all teachers as well as critics, the responsibility of looking for universals in value as well as in form is a heavy one.

The tendency of many trends in contemporary education is not only to limit experience by concentrating on the personal but also to limit it by concentrating on the merely contemporary. For many reasons we are in danger, at the present time and in this country, of losing all sense of the past under the pressure of our immediate necessities. The past no longer seems to have any reality, and this may be one explanation, though cause and effect are hard to disentangle, why, when the past is taught, it is so often taught in a fashion that fails to bring it alive. But just as a man cannot be called wise unless he is aware of other emotions and thoughts than his own, so a man cannot be called educated unless he knows and understands how other periods than his own expressed themselves. To make these seem important in an age of stress is difficult, but if it can be accomplished the stress itself is lessened. Not that the imaginative awareness of other views and other periods than our

own should be considered an escape—though, in spite of the abusive connotations around the word, “escape” does describe at least a part of what happens in any imaginative experience. We must at times be taken out of ourselves and enabled to see what is happening to us in the light of what has happened to other people—and in so doing we must not merely taste, as Pater would have had us do; we must also judge. And, if we are to judge, we must have a sense of values about both literary and nonliterary experience.

Here we come to the second aspect of our main problem. We may talk glibly about a standard of values, but to define what we mean by it at the present time is not easy, and any discussion of it involves much more than merely a discussion of literature. In the past two generations there has been an increasing tendency to consider any experience valuable in and for itself, and this has meant that the type of experience sought for has been increasingly outward rather than inward. Our whole civilization tends in that direction; our entertainment—the movies and the radio, for example—are made for us in a standardized fashion, and are made for us in such quantity that we have little time to contemplate or to judge. The great literature of the past seems slow and ponderous compared to this vivid and rapidly moving entertainment, and as experience and speed tend to become synonymous, the value of one kind of experience as compared to another tends to shrink, and each experience becomes like every other experience. From this lack of discrimination literature alone cannot save us, though there have been people, like Matthew Arnold, who thought it could. Literature is always an adjunct—a reflection, however profound—of the forces (social, philo-

sophical, and religious) which lie behind it, and, if we are to achieve a hierarchy of value in literature, we must first have a hierarchy of value in life. And yet, since literature is the reflection of past values, a knowledge of it can help us to construct a hierarchy of our own, and we may approach the problem by asking ourselves what it is that the greatest works of literature have in common. What is it that is shared by the great masters—Homer, Sophocles, Dante, Cervantes, Shakespeare? Two things, obviously, to begin with: a masterly and magical control of the medium of expression and a convincing and moving presentation of human beings. But we must go further than this and ask ourselves why it is that their presentation of human beings seems so close to the truth. Fundamentally it is because in these authors, expressed in very different ways, we find four things: a presentation in concrete terms of the contrast or conflict between good and evil; a sense of the essential dignity and nobility in individual human beings; an awareness of a reality other than that given by the senses; and an awareness of some kind of unity or order beyond the diversity of individual experience. It is because great literature presents instances of these general truths that we call it great, and we may even say that it is possible to judge literature according to how much of them it includes. Consequently, we would have one type of literature which is merely entertainment (the fairy story), another type which describes merely action (the detective story), a third which includes character on a realistic level (a novel like *Moll Flanders*), a fourth which describes contrast of characters and sees these characters as typical (the *Canterbury Tales*), and a fifth type, the greatest of all, which presents the four truths men-

tioned above and sees human action in their present terms: Homer, Sophocles, Dante, Cervantes, Shakespeare. In other words, what we must be aware of as critics is the existence of certain universals in value, as in form, by which we may not only define but also judge. If we fail to realize this we fail to perform our essential function; we are neither critics nor proper teachers of literature.

But at the present time we must go even more deeply into our subject than this. So far I have been speaking mainly about criticism in relation to literature. But both literature and criticism are dependent on the society of which they are a part; they reflect and they mold the world which produces them and which they shape. That is why the responsibility of the true critic and the teacher is so great. And we cannot properly assume it unless we recognize that there is one fact which faces us, as critics, as students and teachers of the best that has been thought and said in the world, as human beings—a fact which faces us with unmistakable force. It is this: We are living in a period which represents the end of one cycle of Western civilization. The sanctions upon which human action in the past has been based have

lost their meaning. Partly through the development of science, partly through mistaken notions of progress, partly through the shortsightedness of well-meaning educators, our culture (not only in Europe) is falling in darkness to pieces. All cultures *do* fall to pieces when they abandon, as we (with the best intentions in the world) have abandoned, the tradition by which they have been upheld. It is our function to see that the tradition does not entirely disappear. In a previous dark age it did not disappear, due to the curiosity and devotion of a few secluded men who were cut off from the world. But the critic and the teacher are not cut off from the world as they were, which makes our situation both more difficult and more responsible. We have got to be both above the contemporary turmoil and a part of it; and we have got to keep alive, in an age that does everything it can (and in all sorts of disguises) to kill them, those universals which the great literature of our civilization has expressed, and which it is our business to rediscover and expound. The central problem in literary criticism is not only a problem of form, not only a problem of literary value—it is the problem of what it means to be a conscious being in a world that may darken to annihilation.

CHARLES LAMB'S INTEREST IN DREAMS

G. HARRIS DAGGETT¹

One does not read very far in Lamb without coming upon a mention of dreams. They creep into his figures of speech and provide matter for his allusions. Four of the *Essays of Elia* are on the subject of dreams. "Witches and

Other Night Fears" describes childhood dreams and discusses the difference between the dreams of children and those of adults. Two other essays—"Dream-Children: A Reverie" and "The Child Angel: A Dream"—are real or fictitious dreams of the author. The treatment of the popular fallacy, "That We Should

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Rise with the Lark," is based upon the significance of dreams. Substantial passages dealing with sleep and dreams are to be found elsewhere in Lamb, as in the description of the nightmares of Maria Howe, in *Mrs. Liecester's School*.

This preoccupation with dreams is related, I believe, to several of Lamb's most fundamental interests and traits. It is associated, in the first place, with his interest in children and childhood. Common experience and psychoanalysis agree that the child is the most constant and the most vigorous dreamer. In "Witches and Other Night Fears" it is the child whose night visions are the most disturbing and alarming and the adult whose dreams have become distressingly pale. Maria Howe recovers from her habit of experiencing frightful dreams as she grows up. It is natural for one who loves children, who delights in their fancies and air castles and the stirrings within them that die with maturity—it is natural for a writer of this bent to cultivate a lively interest in dreams. Lamb agrees with Wordsworth and other romanticists that childhood is a divine period, that much of the splendor of the spirit passes away in the full-grown man.

In the second place, it is fairly clear that Lamb was a constant dreamer and that as a child he was often disturbed and frightened by dreams. We have no reason to question his account of himself in "Witches and Other Night Fears":

I was dreadfully alive [as a child] to nervous terrors. The night-time, solitude, and the dark, were my hell. . . . I never laid my head on my pillow, I suppose, from the fourth to the seventh or eighth year of my life—so far as memory serves in things so long ago—without an assurance, which realized its own prophecy, of seeing some frightful spectre.

That Lamb suffered from this sort of experience is confirmed elsewhere by the

writer himself and by Lucas, his biographer.² It is reasonable to assume that this element in his life is somehow related to Lamb's inherited and incipient insanity. Concerning his insanity and concerning the relationship of dreams to insanity, we know too little to reach definite conclusions. We are probably safe, however, in taking for granted that the mental illness in Lamb and his family encouraged his vein of melancholy, his concern with the mysteries of the human fancy, and the fascination which the dream life held for him. Incidentally, his youthful preoccupation with the morbid was hardly discouraged by the presence in his home of such books as Joseph Glanville's *Philosophical Considerations Touching Witches and Witchcraft*, which, according to his own account, he pored over and which distressed him in his dreams.³

But that Lamb's dreams were not all unpleasant, at least as he grew up, is fairly obvious from his descriptions of them and the pleasant account he leaves of his dream life. In the morning, he says, while other men are busy in the workaday world,

we choose to linger a-bed and digest our dreams. It is the very time to recombine the wandering images, which night in a confused mass presented; to snatch them from forgetfulness; to shape and mould them.⁴

What writer has ever luxuriated in his dreams as did Lamb! His taste for dreams is like his taste for food; he is a gourmet in both:

Some people have no good of their dreams. Like fast feeders, they gulp them too grossly, to taste them curiously. We love to chew the cud of a foregone vision; to collect the scattered rays of a brighter phantasm, or act over again,

² E. V. Lucas, *Life of Charles Lamb* (New York, 1907), I, 19-24.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁴ "That We Should Rise with the Lark."

with firmer nerves, the sadder nocturnal tragedies.⁵

There is some evidence that Lamb actually had the habit of anticipating his dreams. A revealing remark occurs in "The Child Angel: A Dream." He explains that he has been reading Tom Moore's "The Loves of the Angels." This set his imagination to work, and his last thought on the subject was, he says, "What will come of it?" That is, "How is this going to affect my dreams?" And, if Lamb is not indulging in a total fiction, the dream which followed is the one described subsequently in the essay.

Lamb complained that his dreams lost their flavor with the years:

The poverty of my dreams mortifies me. There is Coleridge, at his will can conjure up icy domes, pleasure-houses for Kubla Khan, and Abyssinian maids, and songs of Abara . . . when I cannot muster a fiddle.⁶

Allowing for the whimsical and an element of fiction, we still have a man who takes dreams seriously and who has had considerable experience in dreaming.

Another characteristic related to this interest in dreams is the mystical strain in Lamb. To be sure, he has surprisingly little to say about religion—that is, the moral and ecclesiastical sides of religion. But he had some faith in, and considerable respect for, mystical experience. When anything savoring of the occult is mentioned, Lamb is at once interested. This in part explains his admiration for the Quakers, whose cult he once considered embracing. Walter Pater said of him:

There is something of the follower of George Fox, and the Quaker's belief in the inward light coming to one passive, to the mere wayfarer . . . glimpses, suggestions, delightful half-apprehensions, profound thoughts of old phi-

losophers, hints of the innermost reason in things. . . .⁷

It is this instinctive leaning toward the occult which caused Lamb to disdain the "Age of Reason," the cold logic of the Godwinians and others about him, and to seek refuge, instead, in an earlier way of thinking, notably that of the seventeenth century, when inspired writers on religion had not yet had their vision disturbed by Locke and the Deists. "I've often wished," he says in a letter, "I lived in the Golden Age, before doubt, and propositions, and corollaries, got into the world."⁸ Thus, part of Lamb's love of the antique is his profound respect for a day and a literature which had faith in the power of the inner light. Even witchcraft, he suggests, is not to be dismissed as an absurdity. "We are too hasty when we set down our ancestors in the gross for fools, for the monstrous inconsistencies (as they seem to us) involved in their creed of witchcraft."⁹ This is the remark of a man who is willing at least to toy with the occult.

Lamb chose friends and favored authors who had an air of mystery about them. Hazlitt leaves an account of how Lamb, on one occasion, chose Sir Thomas Browne and Fulke Greville as the two dead authors whom he would most wish to have seen, because

their writings are riddles, and they themselves the most mysterious of personages. They resemble the soothsayers of old, who dealt in dark hints and doubtful oracles; and I should like to ask them the meaning of what no mortal but themselves, I should suppose, can fathom.¹⁰

This is, of course, partly humorous, like so much in Lamb. At the same time it

⁷ *Appreciations* (New York, 1902), p. 119.

⁸ Letter to Manning, *The Works of Charles Lamb* (New York, 1883), II, 189.

⁹ "Witches and Other Night Fears."

¹⁰ Quoted in Lucas, *op. cit.*, I, 523.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ "Witches and Other Night Fears."

reveals his natural tendency to be fascinated by the mysteries of the human spirit—a tendency encouraged, no doubt, by the relative seclusion in which he lived. The causes—and the extent—of Lamb's solitude have been debated. The traditional theory looks upon him as a natural recluse; F. V. Morley, in his biography of Lamb, considers him a man who, were it not for his family troubles and responsibilities, would have been a more active member of society during those stirring times. But, whatever theory we accept, there is little question that Lamb was much alone with his books and his daydreams. And such a life would naturally encourage his propensity for melancholy and mystical reverie.

We can, then, partly explain Lamb's concern with dreams and also the considerable faith in dreams which his essays and comments reveal. He has, indeed, the mystic's reverence for the dream life. Unlike the followers of "common sense" or of reason, who have tended to interpret dreams either as biological or as mere echoes of the waking life, Lamb looks upon the dream as a manifestation more or less independent of the daylight hours and as having divine splendor and prophetic power. The dream, he says, is not subject to the laws that govern us waking. "There is no law to judge the lawless, or canon by which a dream may be criticized."¹¹ He emphasizes the discrepancy between the dream and the waking consciousness:

Let the most romantic of us, that has been entertained all night with the spectacle of some wild and magnificent vision, recombine it in the morning, and try it by his waking judgment.

Under "cool examination," it will appear "reasonless" and "unlinked."¹² If the

dream bears any relationship to life, it is to indicate the quality of genius in the dreamer. "The degree of the soul's creativeness in sleep might furnish no whimsical criterion of the quantum of poetical faculty resident in the same soul waking."¹³ In a passage which Lamb deleted from "Witches and Other Night Fears" he says more of the relationship of genius to dreams and applies the problem to himself. After describing a dream of his, he goes on to say:

When I awoke I came to a determination to write prose all the rest of my life; and with submission to some of our young writers, who are yet diffident of their powers, and balancing perhaps between verse and prose, they might not do unwisely to decide the preference by the texture of their natural dreams. If these are prosaic, they may depend upon it they have not much to expect in a creative way from their artificial ones. What dreams must not Spenser have had!¹⁴

A man's dreams are such a measure of his genius, according to Lamb, because the dream vision is similar to the inspired vision of the artist. It is the true poet who enjoys the great dreams and to whom they are so clear and vivid that in his waking hours he can compose them into poetic creations that seem soberly authentic.¹⁵ Note here that Lamb measures the vigor of the fancy by the dream rather than by the waking imagination.

Dreams give a man powers of association which he lacks when conscious, according to a comment in "The Angel Child: A Dream." Lamb is speaking of identifying a child in his dream with a child pictured by a poet. "And this cor-

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Quoted from Frederick Hard, "Lamb on Spenser," *Studies in Philology*, XXVIII (October, 1931), 666.

¹⁵ "Sanity of True Genius." F. L. Lucas reminds us that "even the seemingly stolid Crabbe kept writing materials by his bed; for 'many a good bit' . . . came to him in dreams" (*The Decline and Fall of the Romantic Ideal* [New York, 1936], p. 32).

¹¹ "Witches and Other Night Fears."

¹² "Sanity of True Genius."

responsendency," he says "is not to be understood but by dreams."

The fullest and most revealing account of Lamb's dream philosophy occurs in his refutation of the popular fallacy "That We Should Rise with the Lark." Dreams, he says, "seem to us to have as much significance as our waking concerns." They are important to those growing old, because they are a prophecy and preview of our future state. They are, to the aging, even more important than their waking hours, for "the abstracted media of dreams seem no ill introduction to that spiritual presence, upon which, in no long time, we expect to be thrown." This lethal introduction thus prepares one for the future state. The notion that dreams convey messages from another world or another life is echoed in Hawthorne's story "The Birthmark":

The mind is in a sad state when sleep, the all involving, cannot confine her spectres within the dim region of her sway, but suffers them to break forth, affrighting this actual life with secrets that perchance belong to a deeper one.

Note, however, that Lamb welcomes the voice from afar, whereas Hawthorne dreads it in recognizing it.

It is no surprise to find that Poe, also, has speculated on the psychic insight of the soul into an unearthly realm. But to Poe, such insight, if it exists, comes not actually in dreams but "at those mere points of time where the confines of the waking world blend with those of the world of dreams." At this moment of passing into dreams, one may enjoy an "ecstasy . . . supernal to human nature" which is "a glimpse of the spirit's outer world."¹⁶

Considered negatively, the dream is an escape from the harshness and trouble of this world, at least for one like the au-

thor, who was always, he says, ill at ease in worldly affairs. "We were never much in the world. Disappointment early struck a dark veil between us and its dazzling illusions." Hence the welcome refuge and warm security of the dream.

There is a danger here, of course, of attributing to Lamb a formal philosophy of dreams. One must never forget that he is writing an informal essay and that humor underlies the whole fabric. It is partly as if Lamb were, in brisk conversation, called upon to justify his morning laziness and were using his wits to clear himself of the charge. At the same time, the ideas presented here harmonize too closely with Lamb's other remarks on dreams to be dismissed as a joke. Furthermore, though ever a humorist, Lamb characteristically ballasts his essays with genuine and serious ideas. Hence we are not in error, I think, in picturing Lamb as a man whose vivid and frequent dreams served him as a refuge from the world and whose delight in the mystical led him not only to luxuriate in his dreams but also to respect them as vessels of unearthly meaning, as well as harbingers of the life to come.

The dream was, of course, an enthusiasm of many of the romanticists. Dream lore is prominent, for instance, in Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, and De Quincey. Indeed, one of the ingredients of romanticism is a reverence for the power of dreams. However, we cannot explain and dismiss Lamb by identifying him with a trend. His mysticism and love of dreams is, I believe, more fundamental with him than to be merely an echo of the ideas about him. In fact, if we were to trace influences on Lamb, we should expect to find them not so much among his contemporaries as in earlier periods, particularly among the seventeenth-century writers whom he so admired.

¹⁶ *Marginalia*, chap. xvi.

But we find little there. Burton, who was a chief source of inspiration to Lamb, has surprisingly little to say of dreams. It is curious that in the whole *Anatomy of Melancholy* there are but two or three sparse references to dreams. Where Burton does mention them, he is the true man of medicine and offers no encouragement to those who would look upon dreams as psychic. On the contrary, he says, the "ligation of sense" producing the dream "proceeds from an inhibition of spirits, the way being stopped by which they should come."¹⁷ (Here the word "spirits" obviously is used in the special biological sense meaning "subtle or highly refined substances or fluids . . . formerly supposed to permeate the blood and chief organs of the body."¹⁸ Burton thus accepts a biological cause for dreams.) He allows that one can dream of demons and of things divine, but the atmosphere of the dream depends upon "humours, diet, actions, objects, &c."¹⁹

Sir Thomas Browne, another of Lamb's favorites, had some respect for dreams. Speaking of his own sleep, he says: "Were my memory as faithful as my reason is then fruitful, I would never study but in my dreams; and this time also would I chuse for my devotions." Thus he acknowledges dream power, admitting that in sleep "there is something in us that is not in the jurisdiction of Morpheus."²⁰ And in his short essay on dreams he toys with the idea of divinely inspired dreams:

If there be guardian spirits, they may not be inactively about us in sleep; but may sometimes order our dreams: and many strange hints, instigations, or discourses, which are so

amazing to us, may arise from such foundations.²¹

Observe how cautious and guarded is this suggestion. Throughout most of the essay, Browne, like Burton, is scientific and traces dreams to physical conditions and to recognizable mental disorders. Indeed, Lamb could find, in the pages of these old favorites, little support for his notion that dreams are otherworldly and that they point to the shadowland of a future existence. These suggestions of his are the result, I believe, not so much of his reading and the tradition as of his own dominant mysticism and his own vivid dream life.

Lamb's philosophy of dreams is even more noticeably out of tune with modern psychoanalysis, which, like Chaucer's Pertelote, explains dreams as the result of bodily ills or interprets them as directly dependent upon the waking mentality. Probably the most popular present-day theory of dreams is the contribution of Freud: the dream portrays the fulfilment of some desire which has been frustrated in the dreamer's waking life. "An idea merely existing in the region of possibility is replaced [in dreams] by a vision of its accomplishment."²² In this sort of thinking, typical of the contemporary scientific approach, there is no place for the illusory air castles of the whimsical Lamb, whose suggestions are echoes of ancient belief, the biblical tradition, and occultism, rather than of modern thought.

However, the interesting fact remains that the ideas about dreams which Lamb presents are the very ones which still present problems to the psychoanalyst. In his characteristically personal, informal,

¹⁷ *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Part I, Sec. I, Mem-ber 2, Subsec. 7.

¹⁸ *A New English Dictionary*, IX (Oxford, 1919).

¹⁹ *Op. cit.*

²⁰ *Religio medici*, Part II, Sec. 11.

²¹ *Works of Sir Thomas Browne* (London, 1905), III, 343.

²² Sigmund Freud, *On Dreams* (New York, 1914), p. 32.

and very human way Lamb calls attention to the very elements of the dream which baffle modern psychology. For instance, his notion of the luxury of the dream life finds an echo in Havelock Ellis:

The Paradise of dreams has been a reservoir from which men have always drawn consolation and sweet memory and hope, even belief, the imagination and gratification of desires that the world restrained, the promise and proof of the dearest and deepest aspirations.²³

The idea of the dream as escape is, of course, common to all dream analysts. The possibility that the dream points the way to the future—to shadowy things beyond this life—is entertained in contemporary dream lore. "Dreaming," says Havelock Ellis, "is one of our roads into the infinite."²⁴ This theory that a dream can raise the curtain on a view of the future depends, of course, on the theory that the dream possesses powers not available in waking hours. Most recent psychologists have been skeptical of such a possibility, but it is noteworthy that Freud has come in recent years to entertain it. In 1913 he wrote that he considered dreams incapable, in the ordinary sense, of foretelling the future, though admitting that

the ancient belief that the dream reveals the future is not entirely devoid of truth. By representing to us a wish as fulfilled the dream certainly leads us into the future.²⁵

This is a conservative statement. But more recently Freud has seriously considered the possibility of telepathy and goes as far as to say that, assuming the existence of telepathy, "the condition of

sleep seems to be especially suitable for the reception of telepathic communications."²⁶

On still another suggestion to be found in Lamb we find that Freud has speculated and offers a theory. In "That We Should Rise with the Lark," as we have seen, Lamb links those of his dreams which foreshadow a future state with his desire to be rid of this world and to die. To explain this sort of phenomenon, Freud has suggested the presence in people of "an impulse of self-destruction," which is "the manifestation of a *death instinct*, which can never be absent in any vital process"²⁷ and which is apt to motivate dreams. Whatever the validity of Freud's hypothesis, he is at work upon the problem so clearly illustrated by Lamb's dream of the shadowy future existence.

I have risked the danger of encumbering Lamb's innocent remarks with rather weighty parallels in order to show that his ideas are significant and are to this day the concern of the psychoanalyst. We have seen that his notions about dreams are far closer to the romance of antiquity than to common sense or to modern science. At the same time his remarks on the subject reveal experiences and phenomena that still baffle psychology. And, despite his clinging to the past, he expresses the perennial fascination which dreams have held for men in all ages.

More than this, the uncertainty and bafflement of such modern psychoanalysts as Freud suggests that perhaps the imaginative Chanticleer has a theory as valid as that of the practical and overconfident Pertelote. It is true, at any rate,

²³ *The World of Dreams* (Boston, 1911), p. 279.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 278.

²⁵ *The Interpretation of Dreams* (New York, 1913), p. 493.

²⁶ *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (New York, 1933), p. 55.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

that intelligent men still speculate on the dream as the possible source of ultimate truth. Says Havelock Ellis:

I have cultivated, so far as I care to, my garden of dreams, and it scarcely seems to me that it is a large garden. Yet every path of it, I sometimes think, might lead at last to the heart of the universe.²⁸

Lamb's garden of dreams is, as we have seen, a large and luxuriant one; he certainly cultivated it and had faith that its paths led the way to important revelations. Thus far neither poet nor scientist has ventured far enough down those paths to discover whether they end in fading illusion or lead to the truth.

THE BREAD THAT EVERY MAN MUST EAT ALONE

ROBINSON JEFFERS: A POINT OF VIEW

GEORGE G. GATES¹

Frequently the poetry of Robinson Jeffers is dismissed as the work of a nihilist, a Fascist, a romantic. Quite frequently, too, his poetry is taken literally as a complete denouncement of all men. There is a tendency, too, on the part of some to describe his poetry as an either-or. By some, though, Jeffers is considered too powerful as a writer to be accepted as either one thing or another or completely ignored. His point of view, regardless of any question of its validity, is now being voiced wittingly or unwittingly by some who sense deep worldly wrongs.

Raoul de Roussy de Sales, for instance, writing in a recent issue (March, 1942) of the *Atlantic Monthly*, urges an examination of the milieu of the German people as a means of understanding the source of inconsistency between the individual in Germany and his national milieu and of the incompatibility between the German people and other peoples of the world. Robinson Jeffers raised long ago a similar question on a similar prob-

lem: the inconsistency and incompatibility of the individual in relation to a milieu of humanity. What Jeffers suggests for the individual has never, it seems to me, been fully stated. Without judgment, this discussion attempts to give an understanding of Jeffers' point of view.

To understand Jeffers' poetry and his point of view it is necessary to scrutinize his major thesis. Like the motif in a piece of music, this major thesis recurs again and again. From *Tamar and Other Poems* (1924), through *Roan Stallion* (1925), *The Women of Point Sur* (1927), *Cawdor* (1928), *Dear Judas* (1929) *Thurso's Landing* (1932), to his latest *Be Angry at the Sun* (1941), his major thesis remains the same.

Stated briefly that thesis is this: The necessity for the individual to plant himself above and beyond humanity by his own "strength and substance." This is done best, he seems to say, by a proper balance of the universal power found in the objective external world and the elementals of human life found in such persons as herdsmen and pantheistic poets. Though undefined by Jeffers, the term "humanity," by inference from his use of it in his major poems, means probably

²⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 281.

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the creeds, dogmas, conventions, expedient ethics, the mores and folkways developed by man en masse. Such are bad, thinks Jeffers, for these things, if countenanced by the individual, lead to degradation and decay—something he believes has happened since man became aware of his humanity. More specifically in a metaphysical sense, as Jeffers no doubt uses the term, the word "humanity" relates to man's consciousness of himself as human in kind only and as cut off from the objective and external world. This attitude of man looking at himself as human to the exclusion of the objective external universe is the thing that individuals must break away from by their own "strength and substance."

Such must be, Jeffers would say, if I read him rightly, because such an attitude of man looking at himself as a human only is a form of introversion—racial introversion—and introversion is assumed to be unwholesome, unhealthful. Introversion is undesirable because man contains dry rot, man embodies impurities; man, in short, is corruptible. Introversion feeds upon these impurities in man and results in the further growth of these undesirable attributes. Therefore, an attitude contained in the term "humanity" must be annulled if the individual is ever to attain sounder virtues.

In *Roan Stallion* and *Tamar* and *Other Poems* Jeffers states his thesis explicitly.

Humanity is the start of the race; I say
Humanity is the mold to break away from, the
crust to break through, the coal to break into
fire,
The atom to be split.²

To make clear his thesis Jeffers frequently makes use of incest as a symbol to show the evil effects of introversion in the race; a result of an attitude of humanity, as he sees it. Incest and its con-

sequences stand, as he employs them, in the same relationship to a family as does an attitude of humanity for all men. For both are introvertive in the sense that they are a kind of turning-inward, a process of invagination, as the zoölogist and biologist might speak of it.

In the poem *Tamar*, for example, are shown the evil effects of incest in the Cauldwell family. Years previous to the opening of the narrative, David Cauldwell and his sister Helen have committed incest. In the poem itself *Tamar*, the daughter, in turn commits incest with her brother Lee and then seduces her father into an implied incest. To read the poem as an incestuous narrative only would stop short of its probable intended meaning. The incest is a symbol of the evil of introversion of a race that has an attitude of humanity only. By such an attitude, Jeffers seems to be saying all mankind is realizing a degradation and decay as certain as that among the Cauldwell family.

Flooding the whole poem is an atmosphere of predeterminism. For *Tamar* repeatedly iterates that she is subjected to a pattern of life that was begun by her progenitors. In point she says:

... Life is an old story, repeating itself like
the leaves of a tree
Or the lips of an idiot [*Tamar*, p. 143].

Then again:

... It [incest of the father and sister] makes
me nothing,
My darling sin a shadow and me a doll on wires
[*Tamar*, p. 121].

Then Helen, the dead aunt and sister:

... A trap [incest] so baited
Was laid to catch you before the world began,
Before the granite foundation ... [*Tamar*,
p. 121].

This acceptance of determinism, Jeffers seems to affirm, is present not only

² Modern Library ed., p. 13.

in the Cauldwell family's attitude toward incest but also in the attitude of humanity among men. Consequently, he sees incest and racial introversion, the result of an attitude of humanity, be it always remembered, as something old as the race itself and an indigenous part of man's evolution.

Incest is used again as a symbol in *The Women of Point Sur*. Barclay, a minister, loses faith in his work with his congregation, goes to the West Coast, and later commits incest with his daughter. Here again Jeffers implies how strongly ingrained in man is this attitude of humanity. For Barclay, though trying to accept a nonanthropomorphic attitude toward his universe (Jeffers' attitude), succumbs in the end to an anthropomorphic one and thinks of himself as God and the ranch folk as his disciples. Incest, with its evil consequences, Jeffers tries to say again, is a symbol of the introversion that results from an attitude of humanity exemplified in Barclay and his anthropomorphic philosophy.

Of the poem itself, Jeffers says that he tried:

1. To strip everything but its natural ugliness from unmoral freedom.
2. To show in action the danger of that Roan Stallion idea of "breaking out of humanity," misinterpreted in the mind of a fool or lunatic.
3. To present a satire on human self-importance, and a judgment of the tendencies of our civilization.
4. To attempt to uncenter the human mind from itself.³

Barclay, therefore, represents the person who misunderstands and misinterprets Jeffers' idea of breaking away from the mold of humanity. Holding to his anthropomorphic philosophy, a thing Jeffers rejects because of its unhealthful

connotations for man, Barclay lives and advocates an unmoral freedom. As he tries to show in the poem, Jeffers in advocating a breaking-away from humanity is not at the same time advocating an unmoral freedom, license of the individual. Rather he is saying that unless man can give up his attitude of looking at himself as man only, he will continue both an unmoral freedom and an introversion of which incest is the essential symbol.

In short, Jeffers is saying that the individual must subject himself to a rigid discipline and must use a strength that he can get not from other human beings but from the power of the external world.

This major thesis is summarily given in a short poem "The Answer" in the volume *Such Counsels You Gave to Me* (*Collected Poems*, p. 594):

Then what is the answer?—Not to be deluded by dreams.

To know that great civilizations have broken down into violence, and their tyrants come, many times before.

To keep one's own integrity, be merciful and uncorrupted and not wish for evil; and not be duped

By dreams of universal justice or happiness. These dreams will not be fulfilled.

To know this and know that however ugly the parts appear the whole remains beautiful. A severed hand

Is an ugly thing, a man dissevered from the earth and stars and his history . . . for contemplation or in fact . . .

Often appears atrociously ugly. Integrity is wholeness, the greatest beauty is

Organic wholeness, the wholeness of life and things, the divine beauty of the universe.

Love that, not man

Apart from that or else you will share man's pitiful confusions, or drown in despair when his days darken.

This wholeness, Jeffers says, is attained through a balance. That balance he sees as a combination of the universal

³ Lawrence Powell, *Robinson Jeffers: The Man and His Work* (Los Angeles: Primavera Press, 1934), p. 44.

power as found in objective external nature and the elementals of human life exemplified in the herdsman and the pantheistic poet, never of the objective universal with the humanity of cities. This point of view is stated in part in the poem "Still the Mind Smiles."

Still the mind smiles at its own rebellions,
Knowing all the while that civilization and the
other evils
That make humanity ridiculous, remain
Beautiful in the whole fabric, excesses that balance each other
Like the paired wings of a flying bird.

It is necessary to remember our norm, the unaltered passions,
.... the changed lives of herdsmen and mountain farms

Where men are few, and few tools, a few weapons, and their dawns are beautiful.

From here for normal one sees both ways,
And listens to the splendor of God, the exact poet, the sonorous

Antistrophe of desolation to the strophe multitude.⁴

Here is stated Jeffers' ratio for the norm. The whole of the universe must be viewed. Of that whole, external nature should be much in quantity, while men should be few, for men en masse, as in cities, lose the balance by overweighting the scales with humanity. That is the evil of civilization.

Again Jeffers expresses this ratio of the universal power in the objective external world and the elementals of human life in the poem "The Place for No Story," page 125 in *Thurso's Landing*.

The coast hills at Sovranes Creek:
No trees but dark scant pasture drawn thin
Over rock shaped like flame;

The place is the noblest thing I have seen.
No imaginable

⁴ *Collected Poems*, p. 460.

Human presence here could do anything
But dilute the lonely self-watchful passion.

Again in "Battle" in *Be Angry at the Sun*, page 130:

.... It would be better for men
To be few and live apart, where none could infect another;
then slowly the sanity of the field and mountain
And the cold ocean and glittering stars might enter their minds.

As long, therefore, Jeffers seems to say, as a balance of the universal power of the objective external world with the elementals of human life can be maintained, so long is man breaking through the crust of humanity.

To understand this fully, it is important to know Jeffers' theology. As Yvor Winters says in his essay in Zabel's *Literary Opinion in America*, page 245, Jeffers is essentially a pantheist and like Wordsworth sees nature as deity. But Jeffers' God, or nature, is "the nature of the physics textbook . . . a kind of self-sufficient mechanism." Such a theology, since Jeffers tips the scales in favor of external nature as God, and since nature or God is a self-sufficient mechanism to him, and since he sees the world of man and his civilization (humanity, that is) gradually decaying, causes him to cling to the external world. For there is found the example of strength and self-sufficiency—two values that Jeffers prizes.

As one therefore reads and reflects upon Jeffers' longer poems, one inevitably sees his characters degrade themselves and decay. Their degradation and decay come when they either are unable to see and to maintain this balance of the power of the objective external world and the elementals of human life or refuse to act it out once they do see it. Barclay in *The Women of Point Sur*, Jesus in *Dear*

Judas, Cawdor and Hood in *Cawdor*—all pass because they cannot break through the mold of humanity. They are to a large extent symbolical of all mankind. Like them, mankind, because of its incestuous humanity, too will “go the old way down,” as E. A. Robinson says. Jeffers seems to agree, too, with the Robin-

sonian phrase: “It’s the bread that every man must eat alone.”

The question raised by Jeffers eighteen years ago and reiterated specifically by De Sales today—How can an inconsistency and an incompatibility of the individual with his social milieu be resolved?—faces us realistically.

“THE ENGLISH MAJOR” RECONSIDERED

AMOS L. HEROLD¹

William Clyde De Vane’s article on “The English Major” in *College English* for October, 1941, renders an important service by directing attention to the need for a better-integrated plan, for greater emphasis upon the major authors, and for more thorough instruction in the forms of poetry, drama, fiction, essay, and criticism. Many of his proposed readings for the freshman and sophomore courses, however, have already been tried and abandoned as impractical for most American college students. His plan, also, unduly stresses the poets before 1750 and slights later authors, British and American, whose works reflect and interpret the democratic, scientific, and technological movements of the last two centuries. Representing these social and economic changes, modern literature dates not from 1870 as Dean De Vane suggests but from the eighteenth century; Gray, Burns, and Blake are modern; Emerson and Whitman are more modern and nearer to us.

But the primary defect of Dean De

Vane’s proposal is his failure to recognize the value of American literature for American students. His article might well be called “The British Major,” since it is concerned almost exclusively with British matter. Thirteen important British authors are named; not a single major American author is referred to. Dean De Vane follows an outmoded tradition when he lists American literature merely as a possible choice with British literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. His bias may be observed in the remark that “Milton, for example, is worth one hundred T. S. Eliots, five hundred Edna Millays, and one thousand Vachel Lindsays.” What marvelous literary criticism in mathematical terms is that! If space permitted, one might at least commend Lindsay’s revival of the oral reading of poetry, some of Miss Millay’s lyrics, and the literary criticism of T. S. Eliot, who, according to J. W. Beach, is probably the “most influential of living poets.” Though the Dean makes large claims for his proposed major, he fails to prove that proficiency in Middle English and Spenser will qualify students to speak and write the American language or to teach American literature in

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high school. He forgets that Milton often says "the simplest things in the hardest way" for the few and fit; he would have no patience with a student's reflection of Landor's illuminating couplet addressed to Wordsworth:

Thee, gentle Spenser fondly led,
But me, he mostly sent to bed!

Historically, the organization of the Modern Language Association in 1883 marked the passing of Latin and Greek dominance in the American colleges. In the last forty years American authors have enjoyed a renaissance in college comparable to the renaissance of British authors about seventy years ago. Though the sturdy newcomers have encountered no little opposition, the old objection that there are no well-selected or carefully edited texts in American literature is no longer valid. That research and criticism in our literature have been thorough and illuminating is shown by the works of Moses Coit Tyler, Fred Lewis Pattee, V. L. Parrington, Norman Foerster, Carl Van Doren, J. B. Hubbell, and many others. Canby's *Thoreau*, Jones and Leisy's *Major American Writers*, Taylor's *A History of American Letters*, Clark's *Major American Poets*, and the many volumes of the "American Writers Series" represent the best in modern scholarship.

Since this increasing recognition of the value and significance of our native literature produces a period of change and transition, at least three adjustments in our conception of the English major and the college English department should be made.

The first requires a redefinition of English literature for America to mean and to include both British and American literature. Though we should distinguish British and American authors, we should regard all of them as English, or authors

writing in the English language. The English department should include and honor not only the parent British literature, in so far as it has vitality and significance for Americans, but also the vigorous American descendant, which since 1900 has won the Nobel award in literature just as often as the British and enjoys leadership in the theory and practice of the short story, the nature essay, free verse, movie plays, and radio script.

The second adjustment is that American students should be adequately acquainted with the literature of their own country. After all, they are going to live in America; they want and need to become acquainted with the American scene, the American point of view, the American tradition, the American way of living. To meet this need, some progressive colleges and universities are offering courses in American civilization which integrate history, literature, and other subjects. Heretofore our colleges have trained American students in literature as if they were only casual sojourners in the United States, destined to spend the greater portion of their lives in the British Isles. Though we recognize the cultural value of foreign literatures, we would also recognize the great cultural value of our own literature. We would give college freshmen more American prose. We would terminate the present indefensible monopoly of the sophomore course by British authors, because in many colleges and universities only 10 or 20 per cent of the students are getting any American literature in the advanced classes. As long as this disproportion persists, should we not be fearful for the future of our dearly bought but slightly appreciated free institutions? Would it not be much wiser if only 10 or 20 per cent failed to get any American literature in college?

The third adjustment, which is closely related to the others, concerns the plan of the English department. There should be less emphasis on linguistics, both in graduate and in undergraduate courses. It is unreasonable to expect the average college sophomore to read Anglo-Saxon or Middle English. Only specialists need to go deeply into the history of the English language and the fascinating problems encountered in Anglo-Saxon and Middle English. If we pay less attention to linguistics and to British authors unimportant for Americans, and if ponderous courses are telescoped or abbreviated, provision can and should be made for an adequate study of important native authors. Even Dean De Vane implies that many minor and purely provincial or insular British authors should be discarded. One might almost say that the only British authors of primary concern to Americans are those who have attained an international reputation—Chaucer, Shakespeare, Bacon, Milton, Bunyan, Pope, Goldsmith, Gray, Burns, Wordsworth, Byron, Scott, Tennyson, Browning, Dickens, Thackeray, Shaw, Kipling, and a few others. To be truly educated as an American, one must know Franklin, Jefferson, Cooper, Bryant, Emerson, Thoreau, Holmes, Hawthorne, Longfellow, Lanier, Whittier, the Adamses, Clemens, Howells, Lincoln, Whitman, Burroughs, Melville, and others. Consequently, the ideal American department of English will concern itself primarily with the last four centuries of British literature and the last two centuries of American literature.

For Americans, moreover, the too exclusive study of British literature has certain objections. There is the obsolescence of vocabulary, for one thing, as in Spenser, Lyly, and others—even in Bacon and Shakespeare. In America the

settlers found new objects and new ideas for which new words were needed, such as "Indian corn," "clearing," and "spell-binder." From the Indians we borrowed "hominy" and "caucus"; the Dutch gave us "waffle" and "spook." In like manner we borrowed words freely from the Spanish, German, and French people who settled in America. American students have to acquire an enormous new vocabulary, since, during the last two centuries, the American language, in response to expansion in the range and scope of our varied interests, has grown from about 50,000 words to about 550,000. If, therefore, we unduly stress the older British authors who abound in obsolete and obsolescent words and neglect our own writers who are rich in the new words, what right have we to criticize the poverty of student vocabularies?

Another source of American dissatisfaction with not a few British authors is that they reflect and tend to foster political, religious, and social institutions different from our own. The United States has never had either an established church supported by public taxation or a feudal aristocracy based on land tenure and special social privileges such as are found in England. The United States has always been both a political and a social democracy; nor have we had a military and diplomatic system officered and controlled by the aristocratic classes; nor have we had a bureaucratic ruling class, sustained by the combined power of an established church, a feudal aristocracy, restricted higher education, and subsidized authors—a condition in England, of course, greatly ameliorated in the last century.

Many a British author began as a liberal but ended as a reactionary, serving the ruling classes for his living. Charles W. Eliot, in the Introduction to

his famous *Harvard Classics*, stated that, of all the British poets, only Milton and Burns were in close and sympathetic agreement with the principles of a modern democracy. As we know, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey deserted their early political faith, and Thomas Carlyle, beginning as a great admirer of Robert Burns and the principles of the French Revolution, became a reactionary advocate of totalitarian control. Byron, Shelley, Hazlitt, and Carlyle wrote much that was bitter because they were in varying degrees victims of an unfavorable, reactionary environment. They protested but did not much affect John Bull.

Rejecting Dean De Vane's scornful view of student opinion, let us, in the next place, in keeping with modern educational theory, consider what some American college students think of the comparative merits of a few British and American authors. Since these opinions were reached independently by the students in an experimental survey course in which certain British and American authors were studied comparatively and objectively, it is believed that they are trustworthy evidence. Miss Williamson, for example, was asked to read and compare Part I of *Gulliver's Travels* and Thoreau's *Walden*. That most of the class preferred Whitman to Tennyson surprised the instructor.

ON JOHNSON AND FRANKLIN

Johnson's contributions are more massive and logical but less simple and humorous than Franklin's. For the average student I feel that Franklin has more significance than Johnson, and is definitely more readable. The student understands the useful information, the homely ideas and droll illustrations of the selections from "Poor Richard's Almanac." His teachings are terse and picturesque. . . . It is to the original and humorous philosopher, Franklin,

that the student is drawn.—MARY ANN GARDNER.

ON SWIFT AND THOREAU

Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* served its purpose in its day and very neatly pointed out to the leaders of his day their follies and corruptness; however, the book itself in our day affects us in no such manner. If the real worth of a book to a reader is what he can reap from it for his personal use and advantage, then Swift is overwhelmed by Thoreau! *Walden* gains another point of admiration in the fact that it is based upon realism and not fantasy. The entire book pictures natural, everyday surroundings, and the reader's mind is not engrossed in a series of minor events and quaint by-play as in *Gulliver's Travels*. Every one has been to a pond similar to *Walden*, where he felt at home with nature and freed from care momentarily, but no one has ever encountered the alarming possibility of an entire nation of people no bigger than one's hands! Belief in a book always causes the reader to take a greater pleasure in it. Since we live in an age of realism and inquiry, this reader can truthfully say that *Walden* has strengthened her faith in realism and sent her searching for the highways of truth.—PRISCILLA M. WILLIAMSON.

ON TENNYSON, BROWNING AND WHITMAN

I prefer Whitman to Tennyson, because he is more virile, vigorous, and original than Tennyson, who often becomes hackneyed and trite. I like the freedom and swing of Whitman, although I am not an enthusiast. I prefer Whitman's imagery and style to Browning's, although I do like Browning's subtle characterizations and his vigor. I think Whitman's subject matter is more poetic and more expressive of that which poetry should express than either Browning's or Tennyson's.—MARY DOWNS.

As indicated or implied in some of the student comments, the natural or conversational quality of American writing is an admirable, yet unheralded, merit. American authors are free from what we may call Miltonic or Johnsonian formalism and heaviness of literary style, which vitiate much British writing. In ease and simplicity of language, American practice well exemplifies Wordsworth's fa-

mous theory and approaches the simplicity, naturalness, and sanity of the Greek masterpieces. Even Matthew Arnold pronounced Emerson's essays the most important English prose written in the nineteenth century.

For these reasons and others that could be offered, the American people have a right to expect that their children in high school and in college shall be better schooled in our native literature than heretofore. They have a right to expect that every high-school and college teacher of English shall have more than a superficial acquaintance with American

authors; and that graduate schools will modify the theory that proficiency in British literature is adequate training for teaching American literature! Indeed, is there a single good reason why any undergraduate major in English or any candidate for the Master's or Doctor's degree in English should not be required to have a respectable knowledge of his native literature? We do not assert that British literature should be unknown and unstudied or that the history of the English language be neglected, but we do assert that our own literature should have ample and deserved attention.

SURVEYING THE "SURVEY"

ALEXANDER M. BUCHAN¹

Since a survey course in English literature is the literary climax for many students, its aim cannot be scholarship or even a preamble to scholarship. We who teach the course overlook this plain fact. We have a measure of scholarship or pretensions to it, and for lack of other audiences, we pick on the poor students—freshmen or sophomores—and drench them with our "research." If we fancy our knowledge of Chaucer, we spend too much time on the *Prologue* to the neglect of Spenser and later poets. If our "field" is the Romantic Movement, we race through the eighteenth century in order to reach Wordsworth or Byron and spend so long time on them that we have none left for the Pre-Raphaelites. If several of us, each with his specialty, teach in the same department, what students learn from one teacher has so little resemblance to what is taught by the oth-

ers that a final examination for all classes becomes a nightmare of exclusions, ending generally in a paper full of the hoary standbys about nature in Romanticism and character drawing in the *Prologue*.

So as to keep our specialism on the track, we may use a common text—a book of selections that each teacher must cover. Unless, however, a schedule is laid down so rigid as to be galling to any self-respecting instructor, we are still wayward, and for a clear reason. No two of us are agreed about the true aim of the course. Our formula ranges from "masterpieces" or "great books," on the one hand—a concession to the nonliterary student—to the more and more comprehensive anthology, strictly chronological and complete, on the other. No good purpose is served by listing arguments for either faction. If what is asked of the study of literature is some sensitiveness in the average student to literary values, the masterpieces will do; if a

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thorough groundwork for future teachers of English is the aim, a much more comprehensive course is advisable. Quite beyond this familiar argument lie the real elements of the problem of the survey course. And experience shows them to be these: (1) The main difficulty is one of time. (2) No comprehensive course includes enough, and no masterpiece course has an agreed amount of material. (3) Since the teacher will take the bit, no matter who or what textbook guides him, his aim in the course must be clearly defined.

The question of time is paramount. It is not the broad, critical problem of the large amount of time needed for teaching any appreciation, as that leisurely ideal has to be shunned like a mirage; it is the much simpler problem of trying to cover any anthology of English literature in a year's course. From the first gulp of *Beowulf* in the beginning to the vague passes at Hardy near the end, the class drives against an impossible schedule. The most frequent words of the teacher are to this effect: "As we won't be able to cover pages 205 to 256 in class, you will be responsible for them in a test on Friday." The student's question is similar. "Just how much of Dryden will we be held responsible for in the final?" And the material that cannot be decently handled in the classroom becomes always larger as the anthologists, year by year, crowd another hundred pages or so into their bulky offerings.

The least concession to his own "research" on the part of the teacher throws the whole course out of kilter. Either he denies himself or he assigns for home reading lumps of material he cannot discuss in class. Not that it does a student any harm to arrive at his own conclusions now and then, except that the solitary ruminations of students upon literature

are inclined to be quite unoriginal and wishy-washy. Yet the more the professor learns about his own field, the sterner the effort he must put forth to keep from being sidetracked as he teaches the survey. In fact, tied as he must be to a manageable number of selections, he must keep from even alluding to what he has studied and knows best. Unless he does, time catches up with him.

The seriousness of the problem is known only by those who have been on the job for a number of years. The young instructor, full of a recent study of neoclassicism, unloads on his class his dissertation on Pope's *Essay on Man*, footnotes included. He forgets to discuss the extracts in the anthology. They are so familiar to himself that the class ought to know them too. After about ten years' experience, he takes less for granted and offers less of his own proud "research." By that time he may be spending an hour on four lines of text, hoping against hope to make them clear. By such an intensive scrutiny he may accomplish more than by a complete analysis of neoclassicism. Just how much may we expect students to know about the *Prologue*, or *Paradise Lost*, or *Rabbi Ben Ezra*, if we do not expound the poems almost line by line and idea by idea? Essential as the process is, it takes time.

In addition, an inordinate amount of "filling" has to be done. Satisfactory as interchapters are in the recent collections, they require almost as much exposition as the extracts themselves. The very effort to put into them as much as they will hold crams occasional sentences with far more meaning than any student can gather by the exercise of his own unaided wits. With a comprehensive anthology to work from, the instructor must often lay aside notions of chronology in order to chase here and there through the

pages for an Elizabethan lyric to match a medieval one or for a sentence from Coleridge to explain a remark in Sidney's *Apologie*. Almost any teacher of the survey finds it more convenient to gather together all the fragments of early drama, trying to make one story of them, than to leave each one isolated as part of an epoch rather than as part of a movement.

With comment and explanation so necessary, the instructor must make his own choice of what he considers worth while. A time schedule driving him, he loads the course with his own interests. If he prefers poetry to prose, the survey becomes an effort in appreciation and criticism, the rise and fall of literary movements being ignored. Every bit of his own impressionism is revealed in his emphasis, during classroom hours, on the details of prosody, poetic diction, and types of poetry. At the other extreme, he may, by rigorous discipline, insist on a map of the whole territory—*Beowulf* to Bennett—each century tabulated and its important names minutely docketed. He may add Otis and Needleham entire to the primary task of reading the selections. Either way, he seems to be achieving only a part of the purpose of the survey.

Yet, with time as the chief obstacle, the majority of the anthologies increase in scope and bulk yearly. Some of the gaps needed to be filled, but the final result of plugging, or attempting to plug, all of them—and we appear to be moving in that direction—will be a combination of extract and commentary that will baffle scholars to read. For the prime weakness of the comprehensive anthology is that it can never be comprehensive enough. Ought one novel to be included, or two, or three? Must a play by Shakespeare be added to *Everyman* and the *Second Shepherd's Play*? What of the

vast store of letters and records, so scantily represented in the best anthologies and yet so essential to the student of literature? How much of this, and how little of that, must be offered so that the student will have a taste and yet not a surfeit? Professor Hazelton Spencer's recent questionnaire gives a slight notion of the perilous nature of such questions.

And it is just as hard to decide upon masterpieces. Of course, the big names are familiar, and any survey worth the name gives more space to Chaucer than to Langland and probably includes more of Wordsworth than of Byron. Yet there is more, infinitely more, to the barest survey of English masterpieces than a collection of great figures or even great works. He is a curious professor—or is it incurious?—who would discuss Malory without doing some sort of justice to the sources that Malory adapted for his purpose. Or who would venture on an analysis of Arnold's passion for culture without bringing in, too, the mystical belief in poetic values that Arnold inherited from Wordsworth, Milton, Spenser, Puttenham, and the Greeks.

The essential weakness of the "masterpiece" doctrine, whether for English literature or for literature generally, is that the full flower of idea is ripped loose from root and stem, so that the slow germinating process remains hidden from the student. Granted that there have been writers in whom the blossom was fairer than in others, there is still no good reason for neglecting the rest. It does an injustice to the Shakespeare comedies to neglect other comedies of the period. *Paradise Lost* and *Pilgrim's Progress* go together in any sensible discussion, and Keats's poetry is a closed book without some information about Greek mythology.

And each of us, fortunately, has his

own choice of masterpieces. One man prefers the *Hydriotaphia* to Dryden's criticism, and another—perhaps not vocally, but honestly—relishes Gray's *Elegy* and mutters about the *Faerie Queene*. It is too much to expect that preferences of the sort, bred of a loving interest in letters, will be abandoned even in the face of a rigorous schedule. The utmost that can be hoped for is that the teacher, keeping in mind that his students do not as yet have the basis for any decided likings, will do his best to lay this foundation as broadly as possible by bringing to their notice as many samples and as wide a variety of attitudes as are feasible in the time.

So to do, he must have a clear conception of what he tries to accomplish. Even at this late date, it may be helpful to outline some of the aims of the survey course. Just how much do we, in our hopeful moments, expect to accomplish?

1. Something broad enough, to begin with. We have a notion that "every college student ought to know" some authors and their works. Though the list varies and no two people would agree about every name, there is fair unanimity, outside English departments even, about Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Dickens, to mention obvious examples. The slight knowledge of these writers gained in high school must be added to and amended in college. Reasons why are innumerable, and reasons why not are few and eccentric. Whether for "ideas," or for literary style, or just to back Arnold's phrase about the best that has been thought and said, some names are essential. Every student should know what is meant when he hears mention, for example, of the *Canterbury Tales*, Shylock, *Paradise Lost*, a doctrine of nature, and David Copperfield.

2. In addition, these writers and works

should be known against a background of the society of their day. The works, in fact, cannot be properly known unless against this background; Chaucer being fitted into fourteenth-century England, Shakespeare into Elizabeth's day, etc. Enough of this milieu must be assimilated to make clear the notion that great works of literature, while readable and valuable for long periods, are definitely affected in style and idea by the conditions of the society in which they first appeared. If Shelley, for instance, were included in the list, it would be necessary to point out that *Prometheus Unbound* would not have existed if France had not had a revolution.

3. Besides the social milieu, there is the literary one. In spite of modern theories which deny the existence of "types" in literature, most of us are still attached to the practice of thinking about drama, the novel, the essay, etc., as literary forms which have developed in a manner that can be traced. We still talk, perhaps idly, about "influence" and "source" in literary growth. In the survey it is hoped that some inkling of this process of literary development may be indicated, so that the student will learn how, for example, out of the trope came the liturgical play, out of the liturgy came the miracles, out of the miracles *plus* a liking for history, came the early chronicle plays.

4. Still in connection with the accepted writers and their works arises another aim. It is generally supposed that the author wrote as he did because of the circumstances of his life—although this statement is not the truism it used to be—and we believe that discovering a link between the author's life and one of his works is interesting and perhaps valuable. A scholar is less inclined to press this point than a layman, and biographi-

cal criticism may be extremely hazardous; but few of us would quibble about the connection between Shakespeare's youth in Stratford and the imagery of his plays, or about that between the Annette Vallon episode in Wordsworth's life and the fervor of his youthful poetry. A notion, then, of the link between a writer's life and his work—if only as a caution against overdoing it, as is done in the popular biography—seems to form part of the survey.

So far we are on firm, if extensive, ground. We are merely, in fact, applying to English literature the formula of Sainte-Beuve and other French critics of the nineteenth century. Anything like a complete application of the principles of development—social, literary, and personal—will be impossible, for lack of time; but hints here and there—in a manner suggested more definitely later—can be given and some good accomplished. When, however, some other purposes of the survey are brought in, difficulties multiply enormously.

5. A good many teachers still believe that their own liking for literature can be passed on to the students. Nonliterary persons aid and abet these teachers by insisting that the survey course be among the cultural prerequisites for medicine, law, engineering, dentistry. Yet the professor who loves literature wisely is generally the one who doubts if much or any of his own sensitiveness can be made available for his students. He hopes for the best. In every indirect way he suggests a scale of values in prose and poetry, though he is hard put to it to justify this belief. Some of the students he despairs of ever affecting so that they will prize literary quality, and he learns that the more he talks the more bewildered these tone-deaf youngsters are. In any event, hoping for much in the way of ap-

preciation or discrimination from the survey seems idle. At its best the course lays a foundation for students who will work into appreciation later, and perhaps it gives a trace of guidance as to what to look for in literature. The directness of ballad style, for instance, and the indirectness of "poetic diction" may be used as a text to show the virtue of simplicity in speech; and, if the student gets the point—he is likely to prefer Gray's "cleave with pliant arm the glassy wave" to the simple "swim in the river"—he has one standard at least to guide him.

6. A more dangerous delusion, from the standpoint of literature, troubles those who use the survey as a course in "ideas." On this basis, Bacon on studies, Polonius on being true to one's self, or Defoe on projects are certainly more suitable material than Marlowe's last scene in *Dr. Faustus*, or Romeo on Juliet asleep, or Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, for they contain precisely the ideas that can be discussed in class and assimilated as a result of discussion. Godwin's *Inquiry* is much more helpful as an approach to the ideas of the Revolutionary period than Shelley's *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty* or his *Revolt of Islam*. In fact, teachers who labor the ideas in literature ignore completely one of its charms—its use of conventions that have no logical purpose at all. In its "ideas," as Johnson said long ago, *Lycidas* is a tirade against clergymen and a fictitious lament for a friend. It is for its devotion to a pastoral convention, its haunting tones and overtones—all beyond the scope of "idea"—that the poem is great. A survey intended as a course in doctrine would much better be arranged around the minor figures of literature than around its greatest artists.

7. In much the same way a "scholarly" application of the survey material is

usually a mistake. The scholar is interested in cause and effect, the source of a quotation, the verification of a date, the play of influence from one writer to another. To justify himself in a "scientific" world he idolizes accuracy and would rather not offer a verdict at all than give it on insufficient evidence. Such a fine adjustment of check and countercheck about the stuff of letters just worries the student. The scholar's rigorous discipline, too, in his own specialty may warp his outlook and blind him to the obvious. He may think of *Love's Labours Lost* as a study in sixteenth-century mystification rather than as a drama that is quite beautifully written in spots. All of us, one imagines, agree that the survey student needs the drama more than the hidden meanings. An occasional slip or a tendency to overrun evidence is not always a handicap for the beginner in literature—or even for the scholar himself!

The truth of the matter seems to be that the most sensible approach to the survey course begins with a process of junking several of the aims associated with it. If appreciation is hard to transfer and kindle, let it be kept in mind as an incident, desirable in any course in literature, but less essential here than other aims. Students who are fit to be kindled into enthusiasm will not suffer from a course that gives them something to appreciate in place of the vague aura of appreciation. If "ideas" are wanted, let the course be altered frankly into a survey of English ideas, and let the student read Wiclif's sermons, and Ascham's doctrine, and Huxley's arguments. Such a course, however, must not be confused with a course in literature, for there will be precious little poetry in it and not much imaginative prose. The scholar, too, should save his peculiarities for advanced students.

A random hint or caution about rash criticism will always be necessary, but as a warning only.

Out of what is left of the aims a reasonable plan can be made.

The substance of the course will be in the major figures and the major works. There is no more reason for dropping *Paradise Lost* from the survey course because the students find it dull than for omitting surds and indices from a mathematics course because quadratics are easier. Why must the teacher of English throw away his self-respect because somebody or other thinks his course tiresome?

On top of these "masterpieces"—with the term given a literary as well as an ideational significance—will be served a large amount of sampling. In order to point out the relationship between literature and society, one or two writers will be chosen; and, in addition to their own works, there will be included fairly ample selections from contemporary material. The section on Chaucer, for example, might use church records, sermons, estate accounts, medical legendry, etc., with sufficient fulness to give the student some information about the fourteenth-century background and enable him to fit Chaucer and the *Canterbury Tales* into a lively world. Or the section on the Romantic poets could have the critical material curtailed, or omitted, and selections from Montesquieu, Rousseau, and Voltaire added, in addition to Wordsworth's splendid tract on the Convention of Cintra. A step in this direction has been made in a recent anthology that includes selections from classical and continental literature. One feels, however, that the extra material in this anthology is chosen as literary parallel rather than to fill in the social background; and, at any rate, the extra will

have to have room made for it by simply dropping some of the old familiar works.

For biography, too, a similar policy of sampling appears to be sensible. It is a pity that letters, so necessary for the literary student later, should be almost completely excluded from the survey anthology. One would gladly escape *Beppo* for some of the Lady Melbourne correspondence; and any one of the Romantic poets, with the exception of Wordsworth, is only half-known if known by his poetry alone. As with the social background, samples will have to do, though enough of them to give the teacher some choice among authors. The aim—and this cannot be emphasized too often—is not to give the survey students everything in one gulp but to adjust them to attitudes necessary for knowing and judging literature.

It may be advisable, too, if any mention is to be made in class of the gradual evolution of literary "types," to group together the samples of drama, and perhaps by some system of marginal notation, to keep the question of type always under the student's eye. (The teacher is familiar with this jargon; the student isn't.) A stock definition of satire, for

example, repeated and applied several times alongside selections from the neo-classic period, would eventually work in and save the longwearing explanations that are so easily forgotten.

In such a course the professor will still have his fling, but a limited one. By the very arrangement of the material he will be reminded of the purpose of the survey and be warned against foisting too much of his own scholarship or sentiment on raw students. He will remember that he is breaking ground, not yet planting, and the better he turns over all the earth, the finer the crop will be. To the youngster who is in class because he must take it in order to graduate, he gives some rough conception of what literature is about—its peculiar values and standards and traditions, besides pointing out that a work of literary art need not be separated from its age or its author. To the future English major he gives a broad outline of the important figures and enough of the apparatus of comparative study to help him know what "sources" are and how they can be used. As for appreciation, a casual word in the classroom does more than a critical essay in the text, and the teacher's ability to read aloud means more than a multitude of selections.

THE STUDY OF LITERATURE DURING THE WAR¹

ALBERT VAN AVER²

Involved in a war which we must win through the use of machines, we face the possibility that our colleges will concentrate upon technological subjects to the

exclusion of traditional academic subjects. Many people feel that the hours which students spend in the study of literature could be devoted more advantageously to the mastery of the physical sciences. With the view that we must increase our technological knowledge no one quarrels. On the other hand, with the view that during the war we must put

¹ Radio address, July 19, 1942. Seventh in a series, "The War and Education," by the faculty of the Western Washington College of Education, Bellingham, Wash.

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our liberal arts curriculum in abeyance, every person who values our civilization must take issue.

I hope it is not a platitude to say that we are fighting this war for the continuance of our civilization. The word "civilization" can be variously defined, but I should like to offer the suggestion that, in a very important sense, civilization begins where technology ends. Evidence for that statement may very well be seen in the cases of Germany and Japan. Germany is at once the most highly developed technological country and the most barbaric country in the world. That science does not by itself provide a conscience is supported by the fact that Germany uses her scientific knowledge for the meanest ends, as is illustrated, to use only one example among many, by her devitaminizing the diet of her conquered countries in order to reduce them to a state of abject weakness. If the two terrible wars of the twentieth century have taught us any one thing, that one thing is that, just as man cannot live by bread alone, he cannot live by technology, or by science, alone.

On the positive side, what then is civilization? How does a man become civilized? The answer may be found in the simple truth that every man is neither all good nor all bad, but both good and bad, and that man becomes civilized by humanizing—by placing under self-dominion—his animal nature. A man, further, becomes civilized when he has disciplined himself so as to act positively in conformity with humane standards of conduct. A nation is civilized when it lives confidently in the knowledge that with the exception of a few of its wayward citizens most of its people will not fail to abide by its laws.

For that type of civilization—sometimes called "our way of life"—we are

fighting; fighting against enemies who, if we are to judge them by their actions, believe in the brutalization of man rather than in the humanization of man—against enemies who believe in imposing conduct from without rather than in permitting man to rule his life from within by the light of his own conscience and his God.

Now since we are fighting for the right to civilize ourselves, how wise would it be for us even in an emergency to neglect those subjects which best give us that ability? I should like to maintain that it would be as unwise for us to neglect the pursuit of literature during the war as it would be for us to abandon the study or the practice of religion, for, more than the average person realizes, these two great domains of thought have much in common.

The greatest civilizing force I take to be religion. Religion makes man conscious not only of a force greater than himself but also of a force or a will within himself. A person cannot civilize himself without the use of this will. If he does not use it with "ethical efficiency," he may quickly degenerate to the condition of the brute. He will, in short, become uncivilized.

Now literature is also the expression of the will of mankind—the soul of mankind. Literature, at best, is the song of the spirit of man triumphing over his obstacles. In the great masterpieces of literature man is depicted as the victor, the ruler over his destiny, even unto or through death. Next to religion, the greatest inspiration for self-discipline—self-discipline which is the cornerstone of civilization—may be found in literature. Let us not be deceived by the notion that the function of literature is merely to titillate the senses. No one ever spoke more truly than Sir Philip Sidney when,

in speaking of poetry, he said that it not only delights but also teaches.

Let us, by examining a few masterpieces, note how great literature teaches us; how it disciplines us; how it civilizes us.

I shall begin with an examination of that ancient masterpiece, *Oedipus tyrannus*.

I choose this illustration because I believe that this play not only teaches us what civilization in a spiritual sense means but that it also contains a consoling prophecy for our times. The play teaches us, first of all, that every man carries around his own fate in his character; that every man acts for and by himself and at his own peril; that pride unchecked leads to disaster. We learn that no man—and what is true of a man is true of a nation—can feel too confident, too sure, too smug, without escaping tragic consequences. We learn that it is not institutions, society, or environment which are responsible for our errors, but that these errors or sins spring from our own characters. We learn that correction must be self-imposed, that it must be obtained through the effort of one's own will, and through a change in one's own soul. We learn that ignorance does not serve as an excuse to violate a moral law any more than it serves as an excuse to violate a statutory law. In short, we learn that self-respect, no less than necessity, requires that we assume responsibility for our individual actions. Surely we need to learn such a lesson in a democracy in which people often fail to understand that man is free as he meets obligations, not as he escapes from them, that he is morally free only as he liberates himself from desires, and not as he indiscriminately fulfils them. The consoling prophecy which a study of *Oedipus tyrannus*

reveals is that a man like Adolf Hitler, grown unspeakably intolerable on account of his arrogance and presumption, cannot indefinitely escape the retribution of the gods.

What do we learn, next, from that amazing drama, *Prometheus Bound*? Do we learn that he who rebels, regardless of what he rebels against, is a hero, deserving of limitless admiration? We unquestionably sympathize with the hero for his brave defiance, but we miss the point of the drama if we fail to perceive that for Aeschylus, the author, the ends of civilization are to be achieved through slow evolution and not through speedy rebellion. Zeus represents divine law, and, as imperfect as Aeschylus recognized Zeus's rule to be, he realized that imperfect law is better than no law at all—better than anarchy. Prometheus brought fire to man—a boon certainly for which all mankind must be grateful; but was there reason to believe that bringing material comforts to man would make him better? A modern parallel certainly can be drawn between Prometheus' gift of fire to man and the gifts which science has bestowed upon him. Is man better today because of all his ingenious and miraculous inventions? Has spiritual progress kept pace with material progress? No doubt, though Aeschylus sympathized with Prometheus, he felt that Prometheus was presumptuous in forcing the hand of God—that committing a sacrilege even against an imperfect God is a crime which must be punished. And in this drama, too, we learn the lesson that is central in Greek thought, namely, that the individual is accountable for his own mistakes. We learn that the Greeks were too "sportsmanlike" to take credit unto themselves for the good which they did and to blame the "other fellow" or God or society for the evil which they did.

With magnificent honesty, Prometheus himself declares: "With open eyes, with willing mind, I erred; I do not deny it."

Antigone by Sophocles is another drama which we cannot ignore if we are interested in becoming masters of the "civilizing process." There comes a time in the life of every person when he must decide whether to fulfil a duty or to run from it; or whether he should go out of his way to assume a duty or whether he should let "well enough" alone. Not all of us are of the heroic mold of Antigone. Most of us are like her sister Ismene. Like her we live passively before the law, too timid to speak out or to act when we know that a law has been violated or that an injustice has been done or that the very law by which we live is an affront to heaven. Most of us have courage to champion a cause when we know the majority is with us and that the person whose cause we are championing is already in power or will be in a position to reward us handsomely if he should win or that we would not suffer personal loss if he should lose. What is notable about Antigone is that she had not only courage but wisdom. She was wise because she knew when and under what circumstances to be a nonconformist and because, in refusing to conform, she followed not her lower self but her higher self. She had the choice to make between two conflicting duties, and she chose the higher one, although in doing so she put down her life for it. She was civilized, as Christ was civilized, because she knew the *greater* law and how to live and die for it.

The ethical implications are as apparent in the plays of Shakespeare as they are in the few Greek plays which I have examined. In *Macbeth*, for instance, as in all tragedy worthy of the name, we learn the difference between the force in

ourselves which brutalizes us and the force which civilizes us. Again we learn what happens to a man if he fails to humanize his savage cravings. We learn what happens to a man if he does not control his lust for power. We learn what happens to a man if he substitutes chance for law. Macbeth says: "If chance will have me king, then chance will crown me without my stir. Come what time may; time and the hour runs through the roughest day." That thought brings him to his ruin, as indeed it will every man, if he rejects his will as a human being and substitutes heedless chance.

Why, you may ask, do we have to know these things to win the war? I believe it has been said that in the long run it will be character that will win the war; and, in my short treatment so far, I have merely pointed out that literature, rightly studied, along with religion shows us how to build character. The study of literature in an emergency should be intensified rather than abandoned, for even in an emergency we must not let the springs of civilization run dry.

The study of literature should be intensified, for the future is before us, and the future more than ever will have the need of ethically trained men. In a country in which state and religion are wisely divorced, teachers of literature have the special obligation of stressing its ethical meaning. If I have said nothing about the purely delightful aspects of literature, it is because ordinarily too much is said about the pleasurable and the beautiful at the expense of the ethical.

In mapping an educational program for the future, I should not wish to minimize the importance of technological training. At present, or at any time in the everlasting future, to minimize that importance would be to advocate disaster. But there is danger that with our

present preoccupation with machinery, justified and necessary as that preoccupation is, we shall come out of the war as materialistic as our enemies. Against that sort of materialization we must guard by intensifying our whole program of the humanities.

Another danger we must guard against is placing our entire faith in institutional and legislative reforms. We are looking forward to an avoidance of war and are seeking in remote places for the cause when perhaps that place is very near—in our hearts. A great American critic once said: "You can tell how wise a man is by finding out how far from the human heart he places the cause of war." We

are looking ahead to a new confederation of the world based upon principles of economic and political adjustments. There is a real question, however, as to how lasting this confederation will be without an attendant spiritual alliance—without the understanding that the success of any world covenant will never be better than the consciences of the men who sign it. Can we, in other words, have a new world without the regeneration of the men who constitute that world?

I suggest that the great masters have the answer to that question and that we shall fail or succeed in proportion as we disseminate their ideas among our students.

THE DICTATION METHOD GOES TO COLLEGE

MYRTLE PIHLMAN*

The English department of the University of Tennessee has recently participated in a study of the influence of the daily dictation drill on the compositional skill of college freshmen. Recurring discussions in *College English* imply that the problem of too many failures is by no means a local one. It is with the students who make no apparent progress under customary college procedures that the Tennessee experiment has been chiefly concerned. This preoccupation with substandard students is justified by the philosophy that a state university should serve all its people to the best of its ability.

A study was undertaken to determine the factors leading to the failure of fresh-

men in English 111, the course in composition offered the first quarter. Standard tests as well as subjective case studies unearthed the data upon which experimentation was based. A considerable percentage of the entering freshmen were found to be ill prepared in language skills. The first experiment was conducted exclusively with students who had already failed English 111. One section was given dictation drills to correct the deficiencies revealed by the Iowa Every-Pupil Test in English Correctness; seven other sections were taught by four other instructors using generally accepted college methods. The results showed that the experimental section had made more than twice as much progress as the regular sections.

Subsequently, a study of the entire en-

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tering class of freshmen was made, the 688 students not excused from the composition course being divided into experimental and control groups. The results tested showed that the substandard group again tended to make twice as much progress under the dictation method as under the regular methods. Whereas the substandard student was lost in a regular college class, he was able to make as much as three grade-levels of progress under a system designed to meet his particular needs. The abler students, moreover, made the same amount of progress in ten minutes of drill as they did in classes devoted entirely to drill and used the rest of the time to broaden their literary and cultural interests. The advantages of drills prescribed for individual classes were apparent.

The dictation drill is simply a series of sentences involving a common difficulty in grammar, punctuation, or usage. The principle is carefully explained, illustrated, and discussed. Then the sentences are dictated to the class, who write at their desks and take turns at the board. Corrections are made immediately, and each student makes note of his individual progress on a simple graph. The entire procedure takes from eight to fifteen minutes, depending on the difficulty of the principle involved and the ease with which the class grasps it. The instructor can determine by observation whether or not the class needs further drill on the point and repeats it, if necessary.

The first step of the study was, therefore, the determination of the principles which the class needed to learn. As the students had been classified according to achievement in fundamentals, it was a rather easy matter to discover deficiencies which entire classes had in common.

Instruction in some sections began with the mastery of tense forms of verbs. In other classes spelling was the outstanding difficulty. Still other classes were ready to consider matters of style and economy of words. No definite set of drills could be prepared, as no two classes were exactly alike; furthermore, some classes were able to master a principle in one lesson, whereas others needed much repetition before any further progress could be made. Obviously, the method is a difficult one for the instructor who likes to follow a marked text and a carefully compiled set of lesson plans.

In classes of mixed levels of ability, moreover, the drills are likely to be ineffective for some, because, if they are planned for the poorest students, the more advanced ones are forced to spend time on the elementary matters without which the ill-prepared students cannot advance. For this reason a strict classification of students on the basis of achievement-test scores is desirable, if the best results are to be obtained.

The dictation drill can be used as an integrated learning process in which a number of important matters can be assimilated at the same time. For example, if the writing of a given class lacks variety of sentence structure, the instructor might administer a series of drills involving variations in sentence length, order of the parts, form of the subject of the verb, type of subordination, or synonymous designation of objects and ideas. The following exercise illustrates what might be done to stimulate the use of variety among writers who habitually begin the sentence with a simple noun or pronoun, followed closely by an unqualified verb.

After a discussion about variety in subjects, with illustrations of several

types, the following sentences would be dictated, the students indicating the subjects and verbs as they write.:

1. Using printed matter without acknowledging the source is called plagiarism.
2. The acknowledgment of sources is usually in the form of a bibliography.
3. In the judgment of most scholars, footnotes are also necessary.
4. *Mary of Scotland and the Isles*, an excellent biography, necessitated much research.
5. To indicate copied materials with quotation marks is most important.

In addition to the main principle of variety in subjects, the attention of the class is called to several other matters, some of which will have been stressed earlier in separate exercises, namely:

1. The importance of honesty in the preparation of research papers
2. The spelling and meaning of words which a majority of the class have been misusing and misspelling
 - a) Distinction between "biography" and "bibliography"
 - b) "Footnotes" (without hyphenation)
 - c) The unique dropping of the silent *e* before a suffix beginning with a consonant, in "judgment" and "acknowledgment"
 - d) The spelling of all other words carelessly or otherwise misspelled by students
3. Legibility
4. Capitalization and punctuation of the sentences
5. Agreement of subjects and verbs
6. Designation of literary titles

If the preliminary examination has revealed—as it frequently does—that the students are totally unfamiliar with the basic structure of a sentence, exercises like the one above should be deferred in favor of simpler drills designed to acquaint the class with the tools of language.

Even the dictation method will be ineffective unless it is aimed at actual diffi-

culties to be overcome. If the drills are prepared only after careful study of the needs of each class, they will not be too elementary or too advanced, nor will they be aimed at one or two students to the boredom of the twenty-five others. The practice of asking the class to augment the drill with original contributions illustrative of the principle involved is especially worth while, as it insures comprehension and makes the exercise personal.

The method is ideally suited to poorly prepared students, because it enables them to begin where they are rather than at some point preconceived by college authorities to be the proper entering-point for college freshmen. That they are enabled to pursue advanced studies after such elementary review has been fully established. Under the regular system they frequently leave school because they are unable to pass freshman English. Too often the reason for their inadequacy is not merely a lack of understanding of grammar but lack of an acquaintance with good prose models. The time saved by using a highly efficient drill can be employed in correcting wrong attitudes and supplementing meager backgrounds.

Average students react well to the drills and make exactly as much progress in fundamentals in ten minutes of individualized drill as they do in an hour of general review. Furthermore, they do improved creative work in the remaining time, because the instructor has more time to devote to the individual.

As for the good students—it is a well-known statistical phenomenon that the best students tend to retrogress under any system. Evidently they should be excused from the malign influence of freshman English.

ROUND TABLE

DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURE IN FRESHMAN ENGLISH

This experiment came about as a result of hearing the members of the humanities staff at Macalester College discuss their "planning sessions," in which the class participates in mapping out the work for each unit of subject matter in "Earning Our Heritage." The advisory committee idea, the form which my planning sessions took, I owe to my colleagues at Cornell College, Dr. Samuel McLaughlin of the Education Department and Francis German of the Fine Arts Division, both of whom have used advisory committees for some time with upper college students. I determined to encourage my freshman students to plan their work by means of an advisory committee.

During the first week of school we held an election in each of my sections of about twenty-five persons, whereby five were chosen to act with me as a steering committee. By the time of the first meeting, we had already had a motivating quiz to promote analysis of attitudes toward the five cultural traditions about which the course is developed; likewise each person in the two classes had given a brief talk presenting his ideas on one of the basic concepts that recur in this history of ideas type of course, as religion, love, art, freedom, truth, etc. At this first advisory committee meeting, I acted, as usual, as chairman and hostess, but for the first and last time did most of the talking. However, the freshmen consumed cider and doughnuts, got acquainted, and decided that the subject matter for which each student must be responsible to the class should be chosen rather than assigned. Consequently, next day in class announcement was made that each person should prepare to elect the Greek, Roman, Hebrew, Celtic, or Teutonic view of life for the semester. Individual conferences helped in this choice,

and each started work on his first or second choice. Now we had culture committees too, comprising that group of individuals working on the same tradition. These students took over the three class meetings per week, meeting with me more or less frequently and frantically to plan their program, materials, procedures, and allocation of responsibility.

The personnel of the advisory committee was changed every nine weeks, anyone who had served once being ineligible thereafter. Approximately the same number of boys and girls were chosen. At first we met from seven to eight once every two weeks. Invariably some or all stayed for an hour or two longer. Besides the chatter about books, music, pictures (left conveniently in the way), we really did plan things for the course, among these: (1) Quizzes are desirable at least every two weeks and should include not only objective items but subjective applications, interpretations, and expressions of opinion. The time should be determined in class to avoid conflict with tests and papers in other courses. (2) Requisites for effective chairmanship of a class session include making the main issues stand out and applying them to the present, using maps, charts, diagrams, outlines, music, or pictures to illustrate, if appropriate. (3) Reading is important, and hence every student should read at least one nonassigned book a month (our own version of the Book-of-the-Month Club) from four different fields, as fiction, history or biography, drama or poetry, and current affairs. Sometimes, as with this matter of reading, the advisory committee decided to put the matter to a vote of the class; it carried with only one dissenting voice out of the fifty. The advisory group also acted as an evaluation board to recommend discontinuance or modification of matters that went awry. For example, when the bi-weekly quizzes failed to keep people sufficiently up-to-date

to join in class discussions (led, of course, by members of the culture committees), one section decided to substitute oral quizzes every Wednesday, each student as he entered class drawing a slip which might bear a question. This eventually resolved itself into a battle of the sexes, the students in charge formulating the questions and the rules and administering the contest. (The girls lost their lead the last week and treated the boys to a weiner roast.) Likewise when certain cultural traditions proved less rewarding than anticipated, for the second semester a different type of organization was chosen after two ballots and fair practice in campaigning. Two students were to sign up for each chapter and assume full responsibility for presenting it to the class. This method gained general approval.

To judge dispassionately this year's work is very difficult. However, quite aside from the teacher's reaction, I have two kinds of evidence, unscientific but somewhat indicative. First there are the unsigned comments of the students written during the last week. They were asked to indicate by a plus or minus sign whether or not they approved of the year's experiment and to add reasons for the judgment. Six out of the 47 survivors registered a minus. Three indicated a plus with a parenthetical minus following. The other 38 approved more or less enthusiastically. The objections centered around the first semester's work, material more remote from the present and more difficult than the later periods, taken when the freshmen were unadjusted to college work. The second flaw indicated was the familiar one that when some students do a poor job, the class suffers, and the teacher, being expert, is more dependable. Most of these would recommend merely reducing the amount of student presentation, giving the teacher one-third to two-thirds of the class time; none considered handing the class back to the teacher for 100 per cent control. They admitted freely the benefits to the students directing the class. One considered the material too hard for this approach, but recommended the method "in a class which has

had the solid background of this frosh English course." One felt a lack of incentive. No objections mentioned the advisory committee in any way.

Some of the reasons for indorsing the experiment include: the development of a sense of responsibility, self-assurance, self-reliance, and practice in leadership; increased interest and alertness producing more initiative and greater effort as a result of the variety and competition; more intensive study, research, and thinking by the whole class; more enjoyment through the informality and humor which lead to greater freedom in expression; results better suited to the humanities idea than those produced by other methods; training in organization of material and finding real significances and correlation with other courses. The exclamations mounted to "swell" and "nearly ideal."

Some students commented that they felt they got more out of this course than out of others taken at the same time. Did the students in other sections feel this way and is there anything to justify such a feeling? The second question is the only one within my province. All freshmen take a final examination covering the entire year's work in English, the results being placed on one normal curve. Each of the four teachers contributes questions and approves the whole test. How did my two sections of unselected students place on this normal curve? The results are not normal:

F, none; D, 1; C-, 2; C, 19; C+, 7;
B-, 5; B, 2; B+, 4; A-, 4; A, 2

There is no reason more obvious than the democratic procedure to explain why these students so comfortably avoided the lower extremities and lodged around the upper half. In previous years with a comparable group of unselected students and a similar test plan, my students have scattered more normally the full length of the scale; the teacher does not account for this distribution, I am sure. The requirements of the course for the 210 freshmen were as nearly identical as possible.

On the basis of this experience, I plan to continue with the democratic procedure with one modification. The advisory committees will meet even oftener, students will choose the chapter for each semester on which to work in pairs, and the class will be the responsibility of these for *two* of the three meetings a week. On the request of my students, I shall sit in front on the third day and make the additions and corrections desirable.

LOIS TAYLOR HENDERSON

CORNELL COLLEGE
MOUNT VERNON, IOWA

AN EXPERIMENT IN ACCELERATED COURSE WORK IN AMERICAN LITERATURE: SUMMER, 1942

At a meeting early last spring, Minnesota educators discussed the function of the college in this war crisis. The urge to graduate students with the greatest speed conformable to efficiency in their training quite dominated the discussion. Hence all the Minnesota colleges represented at the conference focused attention upon their summer programs. Three recommendations grew out of the discussion: colleges that heretofore had not conducted a summer session might offer summer work this season; those that habitually offered some work might lengthen the session; and in both cases acceleration of content might be attempted.

In the past our college has conducted a summer session of six weeks' duration, primarily for our transfer students, students who for some reason wish a lighter load during the school year, and for the younger members of our own Community. We therefore decided that our contribution would consist in: first, opening the summer session to a larger group of students; second, lengthening the time to eight weeks, or two terms of four weeks each; and, third, accelerating all courses taught.

My course, a "Survey of American Literature," is obligatory in both the regular English sequence and in the cultural content

of the home-economics sequence. In its usual pattern it is a two-semester, or four-credit-hour course comprised of lecture, oral and written reports, discussion, and copious assigned readings. In the summer plan this was to be compressed into one term of four weeks! The leisurely distribution of two class periods per week was changed to four times daily, and in succession. They continued throughout the forenoon with a ten-minute break, or "stretch," at the end of the second period. According to well-established academic tradition, every hour of college lecture is to be supplemented by two hours of preparation or reading on the part of the student; in other words, after enduring four hours of listening to a lecture on the same subject by the same instructor, the students should be motivated to rush to the library and read in that subject for an additional eight hours daily. Obviously, too, a student could sign for but one such course at a time; and very obviously the instructor needed to invent some procedure by which the values originally planned for the course would be retained with the least degree of mental nausea or subsequent mental indigestion. Class discussion would be difficult, owing to the necessity for reading under such pressure. There would be no time for new ideas to foment or for information to simmer slowly in the back of the brain. Time was just the one thing we did not have. Moreover, the regular weekly papers, the oral reports—the whole technique usual to a slowly digesting or maturing survey course—simply were not feasible now.

Also it seemed that in the new slant much of the old content should be abandoned, for a content load planned to stimulate students for an entire year would surely overstimulate any group if compressed into one month. This fact made necessary the rethinking of the whole field of American literature so that the high lights should emerge revealing the paths or trends in American literature and civilization. Taking these facts as guides, the whole field was divided into seven units, and a new picture began to emerge. Selecting arresting pieces of litera-

ture typical of each of these units was comparatively easy. These were assigned to individual students well in advance of the period set for their discussion; all assignments for the entire session were made on the first day of the course. When a group of reports were being given, the rest of the class acted as a committee whose function it was to prepare questions on the matter presented. The following day a chairman threw out the questions for discussion, led the discussion, and summarized the findings. Each student functioned three times, either once as a chairman and twice as a reporter or three times as a reporter. These reports were arranged for two periods each Tuesday and Thursday, the discussions being held for two periods on Wednesday and Friday. The Monday and Saturday hours, as well as the latter two periods on the other days, were lecture or quiz periods for the instructor. For variety from the monotony of continuous lectures there were interpolated readings by the instructor of some of the more beautiful or meaningful passages from American letters. The long unbroken period made possible the reading in its entirety of some works that normally, for lack of time, must be cut. The interpretation by inflection and voice often rendered superfluous any comment in the regular lecture.

What did we accomplish? It is too soon to see what permanent results occurred; to gauge what appreciations have been stimulated and what factual information will stick. But what we can say is this: First, the students were not bored. They loved the course. More comments, such as "I never enjoyed any course in my whole life so much!" "I wish all our literature courses could be given this way," and "Can't we go on with this next term?" were heard everywhere. Second, though there was no conscious check on the readings done by the students, the librarians reported a constant "run" on the American literature reserve. The students worked hard. Third, the final examination—a long essay type of paper—revealed a truer general perspective, a clearer pattern of trends and their causes and

ramifications, and a more surprising amount of factual information as evidence in the names of authors, titles of works, pithy summaries of contents, underlying philosophies, and general critical evaluation of the thought content than I normally get at the end of the year's work. There was a very appreciable falling-off, however, in detailed analyses of style or manner of writing. I presume that this is due to the fact that only a slower reading can reveal these subtleties of writing. Possibly, too, the instructor failed in not duly focusing attention here. Perhaps greater stress in the lecture could have prevented even this loss. But, as an experiment in accelerated study over a broad area of thinking, it was a delightful experience for both instructor and instructed.

SISTER MARY SCHOLASTICA, O.S.B.

COLLEGE OF ST. SCHOLASTICA
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ESSAYS IN MINIATURE

THE RAVEN

The widespread doubt concerning the veracity of Poe's account of the creation of "The Raven" probably arises less from critical application to "The Poetic Principle" than from a perpetuation of the conviction of our adolescence that the author of a poem and of short stories so compelling was a wild genius who drew his inspiration either directly from the supernatural or directly from a bottle of rum. For who of us, at fourteen, alone and at midnight, dared read the dreadful climax of *The Fall of the House of Usher*?

It is, nevertheless, as easy to believe that Poe wrote much as he says he did as that his exposition of his method is a cooked-up rationalization of an inscrutable creative event. For some such analysis as he describes either preceded the creation of the poem or attended it or followed it. If the latter, the poem by implication necessarily becomes the spontaneous creation of occult intuition found by an afterthought to be sur-

prisingly rational. This is to borrow logic without understanding from heaven, or at any rate from "the misty mid region of Weir." It is more reasonable to hold that a good poem must be thought out either in advance of creation or simultaneously with it. Art is the product of consistency, not consistency a product of art.

And quite beyond Poe's word for it, the mere craftsmanship of "The Raven" becomes at points discernible to close scrutiny. The less-poetic verses were wrought by the same hand and mind and in the same way as the splendid poetic ones. But construction creaks in the prosier places. Try even to memorize until tomorrow, for instance,

... the fact is, I was napping, and so gently
you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my
chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you,

and examine also these verses, in which the poet strikes a new low in English prose:

For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above
his chamber door,
Bird or beast.

Or beast? Monkeys are clearly out of the question, and prairie dogs, cats, squirrels, chipmunks, and gophers, especially with such name as "Nevermore," are hardly more eligible to sit upon the sculptured bust. In this phrase, which is merely a filler for the meter, craftsmanship itself—not to mention inspiration—failed the poet completely.

"The Raven" was not constructed by sheer ratiocination or, as by his neglect to mention the faculty Poe would have us believe, without the aid of the imagination playing excitedly upon sensuous, mental, and emotional experience. Like that almost perfectly constructed short story, *The Cask of Amontillado*, it was compounded of imagination and logic. If Poe lied in "The Poetic Principle," it was chiefly by card-stacking.

His lie is far closer to the truth than would be our downright affirmation of his mendacity.

MINIATURE MINIATURES

I

"The one sure test of a Milton is that he is neither mute nor inglorious." This brilliant remark of some inglorious professor settles the hewers of wood and the drawers of water once and for all. Nothing can be otherwise than it is. It is therefore impossible to prove that Milton would have been somewhat less articulate and much less glorious if he had died in 1658. Professor, your a posteriori logic is as invincible as it is pitiless. It beats romantic hypothesis all hollow. But, if you must venture a remark so implicitly cruel, would it be sound logic and quite within the sphere of the is to say that, for us mute and inglorious ones, what is, is one hell of a note, just the same?

II

Neither Montresor's crime nor the world's most nearly perfect short story, *The Cask of Amontillado*, is quite perfect unless we make a doubtful but indispensable induction. It is the priest ("You, who so well know the nature of my soul") who must trouble us. For he must shrive an obviously unrepentant murderer on the mere rigmarole of a deathbed confession. However distasteful the ethical standards of the heaven thus hypothesized may be, the crime, with Montresor in heaven and the unshriven Fortunato in hell, is made perfect. Unless we make this unsure induction, the perfect story of the perfect revenge contains an artistic flaw.

III

No English writer has ever freighted the definite article more heavily with meaning than Poe: "and then I heard the furious vibrations of the chain."

ANDREW J. GREEN

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

CURRENT ENGLISH FORUM

In the sentence "We called on Mrs. Brown," is "on Mrs. Brown" an adverbial phrase?

B. P.

The adverbial phrase does not seem to be the solution. Rather the verb is *called on*, a verb-adverb combination, and *Mrs. Brown* is the direct object. The construction is even more clear in a different sense of the same verb: "The teacher called on Fred first." Here certainly *called on* is the verb and *Fred* the object. See Arthur G. Kennedy, *Verb-Adverb Combinations in English*, or the discussion in his more general book, *Current English* (Ginn, 1935), pages 480-82.

What is the construction of "more than" and "for" in the sentence "The difficulties which must be overcome are 'more than' compensated 'for' by the satisfaction that one has"?

I. S.

More than is an adverb modifying *compensated*. You will find it listed as a combination under *more* in *Webster's International*. *For* is a preposition idiomatically used to relate *compensate* to a noun. Turn the sentence around: "The satisfaction . . . more than compensates for the difficulties. . . ."

P. G. P.

This question arose recently: Should one use a singular or a plural verb in the following clause: "If more than one club (have, has) the same name"? What rule regulates the choice of verb? If one said: "If more than one club (have, has) the same names"—would that influence the choice of verb?

C. W. P.

According to G. O. Curme, *Syntax*, page 59, "After the group *more than* there is a difference of usage according to the mean-

ing. The usual form of expression is the singular verb since *more than* is felt as an adverb, as equivalent to *not merely*; but others feel *more* as a plural indefinite pronoun and employ the plural verb: 'More than one *has* (or *have*) found it so.'

Otto Jespersen, *Modern English Grammar*, II, 180, also comments, "*More than one* seems always to acquire the singular both in the substantive and (by attraction) in the verb as in 'More than one woman has been known to like her.'"

The weight of authority is therefore in favor of the singular, although certainly from Curme's analysis, the plural verb could not be considered incorrect. In respect to your second question, I should say that the implied meaning differs in the two instances: *has the same names* could suggest that each club, or certain of the clubs, may be known by more than one name, whereas *have the same names* might imply a distribution where two or more clubs have one name and two or three others may have still another.

When our English class was studying the gender of pronouns, a question arose concerning the gender of ships, planes, and countries, which are all frequently referred to in everyday speech as "she." According to the rules of gender, they should be neuter.

We have been unable to find any satisfactory explanation for such nouns being classed as feminine. We would appreciate an explanation for this.

C. S.

You probably know that in certain languages such as Latin and German the gender of a noun more often than not has no relationship to any natural or inherent quality in the object. Thus, in German, the

noun *book* is masculine, *hand* is feminine, *eye* is neuter. Grammarians often speak of this as grammatical gender, in contrast to the normal arrangement in English, which is characterized as logical gender.

But a thousand years ago English also had grammatical gender, just as Latin and German, and scholars often think that this may have had something to do with our practice in respect to such words as *ship*, although this noun was originally neuter, just as it is in formal English today.

There is also another way of looking at the problem. Although we have three genders, we might take the masculine and feminine together and call these personal genders, because the nouns to which they are applied are usually persons, or at least living things. This leaves the neuter, which thus becomes a nonpersonal or inanimate gender. We sometimes shift nouns from one gender to another, depending upon how we think of them. The shifting of a noun such as *ship* from the inanimate to the personal gender is a kind of personification and in informal language occurs more often than we sometimes realize. A railroad train is frequently *she* to its conductor—but rarely to the casual passenger, for whom it acquires no personal identity. A submarine is sometimes *he* to the sailors who are assigned to it, and automobiles are not infrequently *she* to their owners.

Remember too that, in poetry, personification is often applied to mountains, rivers, the ocean, time, day, death, love, and to spring, nature, the soul, darkness, night, victory, mercy, etc., the first group being generally masculine and the second, feminine. Here, however, the gender of the personification may be a reflection of the gender in Latin or French or of the sex of a mythological character.

In the sentence "He told whoever might be listening that he was going" is the clause "whoever might be listening" a noun clause used as

the indirect object? If so, what is "whoever" called?

My understanding is that relative pronouns are found in adjective clauses. Could the sentence be broken down to read, "He told 'any person who' might be listening that he was going," and on this basis consider that "whoever" has two noun uses and one relational use? It would be the object of "told" in "I told whoever" and the subject of the clause "whoever might be listening."

M. B. M.

Your first analysis of the sentence—namely, that *whoever might be listening* is a noun clause functioning as indirect object—is correct.

Although relative pronouns are most often used in adjective clauses, they are to be found in noun clauses as well, as subject, object of a verb, or object of a preposition. For example: *Who steals my purse steals trash; He wants to shoot whoever comes near him; You may dance with whom you like.*

As far as your second suggested analysis is concerned, it is effectively disposed of as follows by the grammarian Jespersen, in his *Essentials of English Grammar*, page 354:

In all these sentences it is the relative clause itself in its entirety that is the subject or object. It would not do to say that in [Who steals my purse, steals trash] *who* stands for *he who*, and that *he* is subject of the verb in the main clause, and *who* that of the relative clause, for the supposition of an ellipsis of *he* is quite gratuitous—and in many sentences it would be impossible to insert any pronoun that would give sense and that might be said to have been omitted.

Should an address be written "606 West 116 Street, New York City, New York," or "606 West 116 Street, New York, New York"?

N. G.

If *New York City* is used in the address, the designation of the state is superfluous, although *New York, New York* is equally acceptable.

NEWS AND NOTES

THE COLLEGE SECTION OF N.C.T.E.

THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY MEETING

NEW YORK CITY, MONDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1942

Joint meeting with the College English Conference of the Central Atlantic States Association, THEODORE J. GATES, Pennsylvania State College, *Chairman*

12:30 P.M. LUNCHEON AT THE HOTEL PICCADILLY (227 West 45th Street, across 45th Street from the Astor)

Speaker: KARL YOUNG, of Yale University, on the topic: "Thirty Years of the Teaching of English"

(The cost of the luncheon, tips included, will be \$1.50. Please make reservation by post card to the chairman)

3:00 P.M. MEETING AT THE HOTEL ASTOR

General Topic: "New Demands on the Teacher of Literature"

MARK VAN DOREN, Columbia University, "The Teacher and the Art of Criticism"

THOMAS C. POLLOCK, New York University, "The Teacher and the Art of Education"

GEORGE SHERBURN, Harvard University, "The Teacher and the Art of Scholarship"

All college teachers will be welcome at the luncheon and the meeting and will be invited to take part in the discussion from the floor.

A National Council table and information clerk will be available in the Hotel Astor on Monday, December 28, from 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

GEORGE B. PARKS, *Chairman*, QUEENS COLLEGE, FLUSHING, NEW YORK

Dr. George B. Strayer, director of organization and administration, Teachers College, Columbia University, gives a forecast of the changes to come in the American educational system in his article, "Postwar Education," which appeared in the first number of the new magazine, *Predictions of Things To Come*. The magazine, which consists exclusively of articles forecasting the future by eminent authorities likely to be right, went on sale in the United States and in Canada on October 2. It is published by the Parents' Institute, Inc., 52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York City.

The first number of *The Explicator*, a new magazine of interest to English teachers,

appeared in October. Sold from Box 1247, College Station, Fredericksburg, Virginia, the magazine is edited by G. W. Arms, J. P. Kirby, L. G. Kocke, and J. E. Whitesell. It consists of a large sheet folded into eight pages, each of which may be cut and refolded to four by six inches for filing purposes. Each sheet contains one or more explications of some reference or difficulty in the text of a poem. There are also questions on similar points of interpretation addressed to readers of the magazine. The subscription price is one dollar for eight monthly numbers from October to June.

A pamphlet in two parts titled *A Diagnostic Approach to the Reading Program* has been

issued by the Division of Instructional Research of the Board of Education of the City of New York. The first part is concerned with the nature of the reading problem and the orientation of the teacher; the second part is mainly concerned with diagnostic methods in the classroom. The cost of each part is fifteen cents per copy.

A pleasant twenty-four-page illustrated brochure issued by George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee, tells *How a Teachers College Professor Teaches English*. The professor is C. S. Pendleton, and the occasion of the article in the *Peabody Reflector*, now reprinted as this booklet, is his completion of twenty years' service at Peabody. Fortunately, the tribute to Pendleton actually *does* tell *how* he teaches, so that it is helpful as well as pleasant reading.

THE PERIODICALS

The critical method of arriving at biographical fact and understanding of an author's psychology through the author's literary images is evaluated by Lillian Herlands Hornstein in the *PMLA* for September. She draws her evidence mainly from Marion B. Smith's *Marlowe's Imagery and the Marlowe Canon* and Catherine Spurgeon's *Shakespeare's Imagery*. First, if the study of images is to function as a critical method, the critics must agree upon what an image is; but at present they are confused. Miss Spurgeon, for example, considers "dressed myself in such humility" as an image of movement, whereas Miss Smith classifies a similar passage as a clothing image. Second, the critics are inconsistent in weighting the images. Poets are thought to become "subjective" in their imagery, although they are "objective" in the creation of characters and the ideas of imaginary characters. Lyrical poetry is assumed to contain relatively fewer unconscious images than dramatic poetry. The third difficulty in the critical method is the dilemma of the proper inference to be drawn from the image. We are told that Shakespeare blushed easily, because he says of Venus,

But now her cheek was pale, and by and by
It flash'd forth fire, as lightning from the sky.

Spenser, however, makes similar references at least six times in *The Faerie Queene*.

On reference to Elizabethan proverbs and other Elizabethan poetical commonplaces, many of Shakespeare's images prove to be of very questionable value as indexes to his own interests and activities. Imagery of garden sports, spring, flowers, and weather, which are said to be distinctive in Shakespeare's writing, are all common in the proverb lore. Speculation on imagery rests on a twofold assumption that the image is a true indication of interest and direct observation and that the absence of an image indicates lack of knowledge or interest. Unfortunately for the theory, the evidence for the second assumption is as thin as the evidence for the first assumption. In Isaac Walton's *Life of Donne* there is not a single fishing image.

A few months ago James Norman Hall found a full-page photograph in *Life* with a caption which read: "This quaint 1932 photograph shows A. Edward Newton, late great book collector (*left*), entertaining essayist Agnes Repplier in his library." Mr. Hall protests in the *Yale Review* for autumn. Why is the picture "quaint"? Perhaps because the old collector and his distinguished guest have interrupted their tea long enough to compromise, gently, with the photographer, who has persuaded Mr. Newton to hold one of Miss Repplier's books with the jacket visible. Despite all evidence to the contrary, it is reassuring to believe that by 1932 the "wave of the future" had not rejected all old-fashioned folk but that part of the impulse urging it in a truly forward direction came from the decent past. Essayists should have standing-room at least in the midst of any body politic that considers itself civilized. Destroy urbanity, and men find themselves glaring and snarling at one another, eating the stale unleavened bread of mere economic existence.

The article writers, so engrossed with today, often ignore our heritage as children of Time. And the essayist with his juster

sense of the relative importance of the present moment is trampled under the feet of the capable but shouldering and lapel-seizing penmen. Unlike them, the essayist feels no messianic urge. He offers, sometimes, salvation from boredom. His greatest service, shared with the poets, is to communicate from his fallow mind and receptive spirit glimpses that make him "less forlorn."

Probably most contemporary poets would agree with Paul Engle that the poet must accept the machine as part of his world, not worshipping it as god or devil and not damning it except when it is misused in the deadly instruments of war. From Whitman's time they have increasingly given us pictures of locomotives and airplanes. But the trouble is, as Ernest Earnest points out in the *Virginia Quarterly Review* for autumn, they do not always know what they are talking about. Machine imagery often comes from books, not life, and from an attitude reminiscent of the red man's toward the flintlock musket. A locomotive is described as "the new birth of old Behemoth, late sprung from the source whence Grendel sprung." The frame of a skyscraper becomes "... this iron harlot/With the sky between her breasts." Even Spender calls his "Express" a queen and confuses pistons with drivers. Spender, too, and MacNeice illustrate the common tendency to attribute evil emotions to machines. Spender's concrete pylons are "nude, giant girls" supporting high-tension wires "Like whips of anger." MacNeice's "chimneys row on row / Sneer in smoke, 'We told you so.'"

In the folk ballads, on the other hand, the machine is addressed in familiar and affectionate tones, which express the attitude of the truck-driver or steam-shovel operator. Casey Jones is the master of his six-eigh wheeler:

Put in your water and shovel in your coal,
Put your head out the window, watch them
drivers roll.

Of the poets, Emily Dickinson caught the homely, friendly quality which the ma-

chine shares with all men's articles of daily use. And the verse of Carl Sandburg shows little of the anthropomorphic concept of the machine. Modern poets generally, however, are self-conscious about machine-age imagery, especially the leftists who pride themselves on the use of scientific concepts. In spite of much writing about the machine age, the poet too often maintains a Miniver Cheevy attitude toward it. Auden fears the "Engine drivers with their oil-cans, factory girls in overalls." Eliot is dissatisfied with "The sound of horns and motors, which shall bring/Sweeney to Mrs. Porter in the spring." Modern poets, not understanding machines, are afraid of them. They might ponder Lucinda Matlock's remark:

Life is too strong for you—
It takes life to love life.

Puttenham illustrates the early Elizabethan conception of a line of poetry when he compares it to a day's journey in which the traveler rests twice, at noon and at night. He preferred end-stopped lines with rich, monosyllabic rhymes. John Donne, as Arnold Stein demonstrates in the September *PMLA*, cultivated an entirely different rhythmical effect by his use of many technical innovations. He matched masculine and feminine rhymes, rhymed weak syllables, substituted assonance for rhyme, frequently shifted stress, particularly in the fifth foot, and cultivated run-over lines. His rhythmical effects are extraordinarily varied, from explosive rigor to the low-flying melody of everyday speech:

Now thou hast lov'd me one whole day,
Tomorrow when thou leav'st, what wilt thou
say?

The verse may take its tone from stately marching monosyllables:

O more then Moone,
Draw not up seas to drowne me in thy spheare
Weap me not dead, in thine armes, but forbear. . . .

Or the rhythm may be so pliable as to border on looseness:

So it pleas'd my destiny
(Guilty of my sin of going,) to thinke me
As prone to all ill. . . .

Donne expressed the traditional tendency of Elizabethan criticism to emphasize matter rather than form. Like Bacon, he repudiated the Ciceronians, who searched "more after the choiceness of the phrase . . . and the sweet falling of the clauses . . . than after the weight of the matter." Anti-Ciceronian style, written in prose by Muretus, Lipsius, Montaigne, and Bacon, used either separately or in combination a curt, compressed, pointed manner or a loose, intimate, pliable style meant to reveal the workings of the mind. Persius, following the anti-Ciceronian movement in prose of Latin literature in the first century, is a poet comparable to Donne, whose verse immediately followed a similar Renaissance movement in prose. By his loose rhythms, brusque transitions, and Senecan points and by his avoidance of epigrammatic parallelism in the couplet, Donne, like the writers of anti-Ciceronian prose, conveys the energetic, spontaneous flow of ideas in corresponding rhythms and music.

In the *Yale Review* for autumn, C. A. Dykstra reviews the significant facts in the relationship of "Education and World Conflict" and explains the implications which should guide our planning for post-war education. Never before has there been such widespread recognition of the fact that the nation looks to colleges and universities for the training of leaders. Eighty per cent of the men chosen for officers' training have come from the colleges. The system of national scholarships now being discussed in the hope that we may draw a larger proportion of able high-school graduates into college may signify that at least we are taking seriously Jefferson's view of democracy's responsibility to give all who are capable of higher education the opportunity for it. If capacity to do the work becomes the basis for college entrance, in a generation of twenty years that would mean roughly ten million students. If history repeats

itself, after the war we shall see a tremendous increase in college attendance, perhaps under the stimulus of federal subsidies.

Education will be responsible for training people to rebuild a world which is socially disintegrated, mechanically unified. We agree that exploitation cannot be tolerated much longer and that our economy is becoming a consumer's economy. We shall meet the change by education or by force.

The problems of a maturing civilization must be solved by a people whose outlook is broad and not cramped by early and rigorous specialization. Their education demands comprehensive research above investigation of the minute. It means non-departmentalism for the immature and less emphasis upon *ad hoc* training courses until we have taught individual responsibility and the place of the individual in the universe. The great task of those who are responsible for educational policy today is to develop an appreciation and understanding of world problems and challenges as universally as possible. If we possess a democratic faith, our educational philosophy must be built upon the democratic postulate of man's educable nature, of liberty and co-operation as the basis of civilized life, and of the deep appeal of universal brotherhood.

In the last phase of her work as a novelist, Virginia Woolf was increasingly the victim of her peculiar limitations. W. H. Mellers, in the *Kenyon Review* for autumn, supports this generalization by analyzing the later books, *The Years*, *The Waves*, and *Between the Acts*, in contrast to the earlier novel, *To the Lighthouse*. *The Waves* gives glimpses of weak characters who are oppressed by the mystery of life but who cannot put the mystery into words. In *The Years*, where the characters fail to become real even in fragments, and where the passage of time appears not tragic but fatuous, a sense of purposelessness gives way to a sense of oppressive frustration. Easily the best part of the book, the section on the "Present Day" is comparable in quality to Kurt Weil's neu-

rastrhenic ballet *The Seven Deadly Sins. Between the Acts* reinforces the suspicion that the vacuousness which in Mrs. Woolf's later work would seem to be life's final meaning is of Mrs. Woolf's and not of life's making. As a novelist, she may have been too concerned about life to be very adequately concerned about living.

As a reviewer pointed out on the publication of *Mrs. Dalloway*, Mrs. Woolf's intellectual capacity was oddly disproportionate to her sensitiveness. If she ventured outside the range imposed on her by nervous sensation, she became a child. When she was concerned with personal reminiscence, she could use her impressions, in their variously subtle interrelations, to form a whole; and perhaps what she did in *To the Lighthouse* could be one only once. As a sensuous artist, she saw perceptions of the senses as transitory and mutable, dominated by time, and in *To the Lighthouse* she found in the long-anticipated trip to the lighthouse a central symbol for her theme which is just and integral. In this book her conception of human relationships and moral values is delicate and sure, graded around the positive figure of Mrs. Ramsay. Mrs. Woolf did not use the novel qua novel but for a poetical end, and she achieved but one triumph.

From 1902, the year of his death, until 1920 Samuel Butler steadily rose to fame. After 1920 his influence at first declined, but in late years, as modern psychology has achieved remarkable results by using concepts similar to Butler's theory of "unconscious racial memory," his views are less discordant with prevailing scientific hypotheses. In the September *PMLA*, Lee Elbert Holt traces Butler's rise to fame up to 1920. The obituaries, written before publication of *The Way of All Flesh*, praised Butler as an honest satirist, original and daring but eccentric and disappointing in the whole of his work. After 1903, first Arnold Bennett then Clutton-Brock and others praised *The Way of All Flesh*, but it was not until much later that the novel was generally read. The London *Times* review

appeared in 1919. In 1904 George Bernard Shaw publicized Butler's ideas on the subject of evolution in *Man and Superman*, later stating his indebtedness clearly in the Preface to *Major Barbara* (1907). In 1906 Marcus Hartog, the biologist, instituted the annual Erewhon dinners, which grew in attendance to a hundred and sixty prominent men in 1914. Before the war ended Butler was written about in France, Germany, and America from the points of view of philosophy, biology, and prose fiction. Upon the publication of his notebooks in 1912, the *International Journal of Ethics* praised Butler's style, saying that "never since the eighteenth century was there such consummate ease and simplicity, such point, such nervous energy." By 1920 he had achieved a more extensive fame than anyone could have foreseen at the time of his death.

Unlike university professors who would agree that no one person can teach an outline course in humanities, Herbert Waldo Hines believes that the humanities course cannot be taught successfully unless it is the work of one instructor. He presents his case in the *Junior College Journal* for September. It is poor psychology to expect that students will achieve mastery by advertising that the material is too much for one instructor. The sense of continuity, of relationship among the parts of the course, furthermore, must be impaired if more than one instructor participates.

From the humanities course the terminal students need to secure the general education which will prepare them for later casual reading. In the class are temperamentally studious people who will read penetratively, though they will never make a pretense at scholarship. There are also the students who will go on to professional schools and to lives of scholarship. For all these students, it is an advantage to enjoy the guidance of one instructor who comes to understand their specific needs.

An outline course in the humanities, properly administered, not only can be im-

portant in the cultural development of the ordinary student but can also furnish the scaffolding of historical perspective needed for our post-war planning and can arm the prospective specialist against dogmatism.

During the decade 1930-40 twenty-four universities conferred the Ed.D. degree on 804 persons now living. For the Ph.D. degree the corresponding figures are fifty-five graduate schools and 2,713 persons. In the *Journal of Higher Education* for May, Ernest V. Hollis compares the status of the two groups of Doctors. The accompanying table shows their relative success in finding positions.

	Ed.D.'s (Per Cent)	Ph.D.'s (Per Cent)
Employed in all types of higher education.....	46	58
Graduate work.....	14	17
Colleges.....	27	37
Junior colleges.....	5	4
Elementary and secondary schools	42	25*
Research.....	3	6
Administration.....	40	31*
Unsatisfactory employment.....	6	7
Unemployed.....	1.4	0.9

* In education.

So far, there is little difference between the requirements for the Ed.D. and for the Ph.D. The progressive graduate school will be the one which makes a realistic differentiation in its doctoral program based on ascertained differences in job demands. At present, statistics show that universities actually differ in the kinds of professional training which they have developed. One university, for example, places 69 per cent of its Ed.D. graduates in administrative positions, whereas another places only 30 per cent in administration. To be of maximum benefit, the graduate schools must recognize and foster this division of labor, each one advertising restricted offerings and making selective admissions. The period of quantity production for expanding needs seems to be drawing to a close.

A statistical analysis of 93 letters of application written by students in education classes at the University of Wisconsin is published in the April *Journal of Educational Research* by Phil C. Lange. In general, the students included similar items in their letters, stressing ability to take charge of extracurricular activities, but they differed widely in effectiveness of presentation. Only 10 of the 93 letters were ranked "worthy of careful consideration." The letters of the 20 language majors were lower in median rank than the others. Only 6 of the 93 letters were free from mechanical errors, of which the median number per letter was 14. Errors in diction, abbreviation, punctuation, spelling, and grammatical agreement were the most frequent. Finally, the students proved unable to evaluate their own letters, and they showed no skill in emphasizing those points which they considered most likely to gain an administrator's favor.

RECORDS

Growth of Democracy: From the Magna Carta to the Constitution

Ten double-faced, 12-inch..... \$25.00
Erpi Classroom Films, Inc.
1814 Broadway
New York, N.Y.

Authenticated dramatizations of the following salient episodes in the development of democratic institutions: Magna Carta, Beginnings of Parliament, Freeing of the Serfs, Mayflower Compact, House of Burgesses, Petition of Right, New England Town Meeting, Public Education Begins, Penn and Religious Liberty, Bacon's Rebellion, Right of Habeas Corpus, Indictment of Slavery, Locke on Human Rights, Freedom of the Press, Search and Seizure Issue, Stamp Tax—Proposal, Stamp Tax—Opposition, American Outlook: 1775, Declaration of Independence, The Constitution. A study guide is provided containing introductions, text, questions, bibliographies.

BOOKS

THE ECONOMIC NOVEL IN AMERICA

In *The Economic Novel in America*¹ Professor Taylor takes strong issue with such critics of the "Gilded Age" as Brooks, Mumford, and Parrington who have generalized glibly about the complacency of its writers in regard to the social problems of the "Machine Age." The idea that the "literary fraternity were joined solidly in league with the financial fraternity" he declares a myth. He has re-examined the attitudes of the period in speeches, editorials, and treatises, but chiefly as reflected in the work of its leading novelists, Mark Twain, Hamlin Garland, Edward Bellamy, William Dean Howells, Frank Norris, and many lesser figures. And he finds that the American critique of capitalistic industrialism, derived from the old deistic optimism and agrarian democracy, has been more continuously dynamic than has been supposed.

His well-documented, closely reasoned, though somewhat repetitious account passes under review some 250 volumes of economic fiction which appeared between 1870 and 1900. In a preliminary chapter the author considers the major forces which produced maladjustment: the quick growth of cities, the influx of cheap labor, the aggressions of "Big Business." Next he considers the "lesser novelists," and here, as he outlines their attitudes to bad working conditions, to depressions and cyclical unemployment, to the evils of speculation and political bosses, he makes his most original contribution. In this connection he discusses the novels of such writers as Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, John W. DeForest, John Hay, H. F. Keenan, Robert Grant, H. H. Boyesen, J. G. Holland, Mar-

garet Deland, Mary Wilkins Freeman, Stephen Crane, and many others. It is apparent that this group failed to grasp "the enormous extent and power of the drive toward consolidation." What is not so clearly brought out is that the earlier novelists approached their problem timidly and from the capitalist point of view, while the later ones wrote more boldly and from the standpoint of labor. Henry George's *Progress and Poverty* and Charles M. Sheldon's *In His Steps*, economic tracts rather than literature, had enormous circulation. The best economic novels, according to Professor Taylor, were the *Connecticut Yankee*, *Looking Backward*, *A Hazard of New Fortunes*, *Main-Travelled Roads*, *The Octopus*, and *The Gilded Age*.

Edward Bellamy and William Dean Howells seem best to have understood the economic problems of the Gilded Age. Mark Twain enjoyed the machine even while he sought to lessen its abuses, though he was hardly "the spokesman of the Philistine majority," as Van Wyck Brooks brands him. Garland, too, after giving hostages to fortune in a capitalistic society, developed away from the economic left. Norris belonged to the upper bourgeoisie, and emphasized at the end of the century the romance of economic struggle rather than the urgency of economic reform. Bellamy's social criticism, therefore, best systematized and dramatized the aims of the American middle-class protest against plutocracy. Both he and Howells favored collectivism, but neither was a Marxist; both believed that socialism would gradually emerge out of advancing democracy. Howells's advocacy of various reforms, including the nationalizing of natural monopolies as an approach to the co-operative commonwealth of the future, shows him to have been the most forceful, realistic thinker in the period.

¹ By Walter Fuller Taylor. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1942. 378 pp. + Bibliog. \$4.00.

The Economic Novel in America is a thorough and evenly tempered book. It is most timely, and should be followed up by a history of the economic novel in the twentieth century.

ERNEST E. LEISY

SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

A NEW BOOK ON COMPOSITION

DEAR MESSRS. GULLETTE
AND MCCRIMMON:

Since you, in your new book, *Writing Effectively*,¹ address your student readers directly with the second person, may I be permitted, in talking about your book for Editor Hatfield, to address you in letter form? Maybe teacher-readers of *College English* will enjoy looking over my shoulder as I write.

Your publishers have made a very good-looking book for you. The type is large and clear, the spacings are aesthetically more than adequate, the paper is smooth and very white. The spiral binding is convenient for the tearing-out of exercises, and the heavy paper cover is comely in color and layout.

The device of addressing your students directly is to be commended. It is new and should have good effect. May I, for the benefit of shoulder-lookers-over, quote a bit? On page 61 you say:

When you are speaking you never worry about periods, commas, exclamation points, or any of the other marks of punctuation; yet you use easily and effectively certain devices which might be called *speech punctuation*. . . .

Now when you want to write your ideas instead of speaking them, you have to use different tools. Instead of using your vocal cords, you use a pen or a pencil or a typewriter; and, since your speech punctuation cannot be shown by these new tools, you have to find some other means of showing it. Consequently you use what are called punctuation marks. Instead of a certain kind of rising pitch, you use a question mark after the words that you want understood

as a question; or you use commas, parentheses, or dashes to separate different units within the sentence. Of course, you have to know which kind of mark should be used on each occasion, or your meaning will be misunderstood. . . .

May I say kind words about a few other things? The diagnostic tests at the beginning of the book should be useful for teachers and helpful for the really interested student. I very much like your *reasoning-out* of some of the matters in our language that puzzle students. For instance, your comparison and differentiation of the techniques of spoken and written English, part of it in the quotation above, is good. (More might be said of the greater importance in written than in spoken English of the indication of grammatical relationship.) Your injection here and there of a bit of the history of the language should help the thoughtful student. Your justified distinction between "functional" and "conventional" faults should appeal to him. Your insistence upon the idea that many things called faults are not truly "incorrect" but merely "inappropriate" should make the student feel that he is being asked to be intelligent.

Commendations: your use of the word "nonsentence"; your treatment of "absolutes"; your recommendation of diagramming; your suggestion that punctuation often has the function of a "signal" to the reader; your indication that the conjunction *for* is subordinating, whereas most textbook writers carelessly class it with the simple coordinating conjunctions.

Questions: Is not the function of the preposition such that this function needs specific mention in chapter iv? Does the copulative verb need fuller definition and discussion? Does "inflection" need explanation? How (p. 89) can a participle be "called a gerund"? Does not a verbal "function" *both* as a verb *and* as another part of speech? Or am I merely quarreling about the word "function"? Or should "function" be explained?

If it is true that in grade and high school the usage of the language must be taught with some dogmatism for simplicity and that by college time some liberality and

¹ By George A. Gullette and James M. McCrimmon. New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1941.

philosophy and perspective may be permitted without undue encouragement of looseness, your book should be good for students mentally growing up.

Why mention student "gems" as horrible? Why mention them at all? Let us not encourage that poor fellow, the *scornful* schoolteacher.

J. H. McKEE

PURDUE UNIVERSITY

MR. LANDIS CAN WRITE—AND TO FRESHMEN

"This whole process of choosing a subject is analogous to making up your mind. Dinner is over and you have the evening before you. Part of your mind wants to go to a movie; part of it wants to go to a dance; and part of it remembers that all of it ought to stay at home and study. If you never make up your mind, you neither see a picture, dance, nor prepare for that quiz. . . . In the same way, whatever topic you choose to write about presents several aspects, some of which have to be discarded in order that your composition may say something definite."

Exemplifying the soundness of this advice, even for one presumably past the stage of freshman immaturity at which it is directed, I cull from my notes these comments on *Freshman Composition*.¹

Many authors who are writing books for freshmen suggest the interesting spectacle of one cripple attempting to carry another across Michigan Boulevard at five-twenty in the afternoon. But Mr. Landis himself at least knows how to write. His style is fresh, vigorous, and picturesque, illustrated with constant apt analogy: "Too many students face the grammatical management of a sentence with the trepidation of a snob

confronted for the first time with the array of cutlery for a ten-course dinner."

But in spite of a generous suspicion of rules, the repeated statement of which suspicion may be disturbing to the conservative, the author manages to cover most of the generally accepted rules of grammar, punctuation, etc., and advises the freshman not to offend his reader by ignoring them. After all, "usage has established certain ways of showing the relationships between words in sentences," and this usage "creates in your reader an expectancy that you, like other writers, will follow it; so that he inevitably reads your sentences grammatically whether you write them so or not."

Discussing material for writing, the author agrees that the subjective "is unquestionably more vivid, more valid, and more interesting to the writer." For most effective writing, however, he gives the freshman this advice: "Choose an objective subject, gather authentic information about it, and then try to make that information just as clear and significant to your reader as it is to you." He appears to think of the subjective and the objective primarily as discrete entities rather than of narrow subjectivity broadened by reading or of remote objectivity vivified by personal experience with it.

Nevertheless, when Joe College and Betty Coed read this book, they will understand that Mr. Landis lives in no vacuum of scholarly self-absorption but that he has a keen appreciation of their everyday writing problems. I have read few books by college professors which are as realistic as *Freshman Composition*.

The book covers the usual material, though briefly on some points—with an added chapter on poetry; has suggestive exercises following the several chapters; and atones for the virtual absence of a symbol scheme in the text by a usable index.

A. STARBUCK

¹ By Paul Nissley Landis. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co., 1940.

IN BRIEF REVIEW

[Mention under this head does not preclude review elsewhere.]

FOR THE GENERAL READER

Summer after Summer. By Richard Sullivan. Doubleday. \$2.50.

To Eddie Nails and his young wife, living on \$25 a week and craving the small pleasures of life, the coming of a second child brought uneasiness. How they solved their problem—welcomed the new child and fitted it into their pattern of life—makes a fine family story truly representative of many young people in America today.

Young Man of the World. By T. R. Ybarra. Washburn. \$3.00.

This is a follow-up of *Young Man of Caracas*—similar in vein, witty and humorous yet wise.

The Best American Short Stories, 1942. Edited by Martha Foley. Houghton Mifflin. \$2.75.

"A concentrated introduction to contemporary American fiction in miniature." The familiar annual collection of short stories edited by the late E. J. O'Brien is continued by Martha Foley. There are thirty-odd stories written by outstanding authors of fiction. No better means can be devised for comparing methods and styles of leading writers and for observing present trends.

The Death of the Moth. By Virginia Woolf. Harcourt, Brace. \$3.00.

A posthumous collection of distinguished essays; some are new, others have been published in magazines.

The Young Matriarch. By G. B. Stern. Macmillan. \$3.00.

In this lengthy novel, 650 pages of small print, the author has returned to the popular Rakovitz family and the astonishing Matriarch. Her plot ranges through Hollywood, Italy, London; her style is vivid, and interest never flags.

Hostages. By Stefan Heyn. Putnam. \$2.50.

A story of horror, suspense, and treachery and of admiration for the brave peoples who resist Nazi occupation. The scene is laid in Prague, the main characters are five hostages sentenced to death, two brave women, and the Gestapo. A convincing picture of human nature at its worst and its best—at best only when we see fine people fighting against the beast in man.

All in Our Day. By Manuel Komroff. Harper. \$2.50.

These stories, says Komroff, author of *Coronet*, in a foreword, include the very best of the short stories which he has written during the last twenty-five

years. There are three groups: "Tales of War," "Tales of Peace," and "Strange Stories."

Fiesta in November: Stories from Latin America. Edited by Angel Flores and Dudley Poore. Introduction by Katherine Anne Porter. Houghton Mifflin. \$3.00.

This collection, representing eleven countries, contains three novelettes and fifteen stories not before available in English. In many of the stories the struggle for soul and existence is deep and predominant. Written with a technique very different from that of the short stories to which we have been accustomed, they are vital and effective. While dealing with Latin-American life exclusively, they have a quality which relates them to the universal life-problems of this war-torn world.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. By Lewis Carroll. Doubleday.

A facsimile of the first edition, with forty-two illustrations by John Tenniel. Many adults will wish to renew their acquaintance with Alice in this very attractive volume.

Men at War. Edited by Ernest Hemingway. Crown. \$3.00.

Over seventy-five of the best war stories of all time. A thousand-page anthology with an introduction by Hemingway.

The Yale Review Anthology. Edited by Wilbur Cross and Helen MacAfee. Yale University Press. \$2.75.

Twenty-seven contributions to the *Yale Review*, most of them in the 1930's, are presented under the head "Essays and Sketches," "Public Affairs," and "Imaginative Literature." The roster of authors is probably not surpassed in eminence by those of any book of contemporary writing. Fewer of the papers deal with the changing "outer weather" of public affairs than deal with the "inner weather" of the human spirit.

Under My Elm: Country Discoveries and Reflections. By David Grayson. Doubleday. \$2.00.

From David Grayson (*Adventures in Friendship, Adventures in Contentment*) we have a book which may prove a solace to many readers—a book extolling the joys of nature, of the simple life, and of working with one's own hands on a few acres of one's own.

Those Enduring Young Charms. By Ruth Hooper Larison. Harper. \$2.75.

How to turn middle life into a gay and gallant adventure—to cash in on maturity—with much more personal advice on grooming, exercising, dressing, is

the theme of this book, whose author is a well-known beauty and fashion editor.

The Substance That Is Poetry. By Robert P. Tristram Coffin. Macmillan. \$2.00.

Every poet, says Mr. Coffin, sooner or later discovers that there is independent life behind the words and patterns he is handling. "It is because poetry deals with such tangible things," Mr. Coffin says, "that I have given this title to my book. Poetry, which is the telling of the best that can be said about life, brings the best things together—the best words for the best objects in the best music."

Texas: A World in Itself. By George Sessions Perry. Whittlesey. \$2.75.

Many readers will remember *Autumn in Your Hand*, by the same author. This rich and varied account of contemporary Texans and their native state is equally interesting.

Latin America: Its Place in World Life. By Samuel Guy Inman. Harcourt, Brace. \$4.00.

A completely revised edition of stories of South American republics.

Action against the Enemy's Mind. By Joseph Bornstein and Paul Milton. Bobbs-Merrill. \$2.00.

What the Axis is trying to do to our morale. What are we doing to attack the Axis morale? An attempt to arouse complacent Americans.

Flight from Terror. By Otto Strasser and Michael Stern. McBride. \$3.00.

The originator of the Black Front, underground organization of enemies of Hitler, tells a story of terror and escape. Many startling facts about Hitler, Göring, Goebbels, and other leaders.

A Time for Greatness. By Herbert Agar. Little, Brown. \$2.50.

The Pulitzer Prize winner deals concretely with many of our most serious problems, including foreign affairs. History, he says, exacts from America a special greatness at this time—not only in the way of material resources but in leadership and defense of freedom and the American ideal.

Usage and Abusage. By Eric Partridge. Harper. \$3.00.

The pitfalls and hazards in the English language, with annotations for America by Professor W. Cabell Greet.

Pageant of the Popes. By John Farrow. Sheed & Ward. \$3.50.

A realistic picture of the pageant of popes, covering nineteen hundred years, and the story of the in-

fluence of the papacy in European history. Of interest to people of all creeds.

American Harvest: Twenty Years of Creative Writing in the United States. Edited by Allen Tate and John Peale Bishop. Fischer. \$3.50.

In this rich anthology the two editors present representative selections from the works of all those whom they consider the most significant contemporary writers. One purpose has been to show that American writers have become conscious of literary material in American life. The editors have sought in their arrangement of material to show the wide variety of currents of influence and the general lines of development in the literature of the last twenty years.

The Turning Point. By Klaus Mann. Fischer. \$3.00.

The son of Thomas Mann, now a refugee in the United States, writes the autobiography of a German youth, himself, "who spent the best time of his life in a social and spiritual vacuum—restless, wandering, haunted by those solemn abstractions in which few believed—civilization, progress, liberty." He writes well the study of a young man's spiritual development. He was born into luxury, and life made of him only intellectual demands, "solemn abstractions." Reading his story of frustration, one wonders a bit about civilization, about the brave youth who are voluntarily fighting for "civilization—progress—liberty."

What's in a Novel. By Helen E. Haines. Columbia University Press. \$2.75.

The purpose of this book, says the author, is "to set forth simply and clearly some of the values that in ever widening radiation exist in present-day fiction." The novel and its most significant manifestations are her concern rather than criticism or literary history. "The Province of the Novel," "Values and Relationships," "Vistas in European Fiction," "The Lure of Crime," and "Fiction from Latin America" are some of the chapter headings.

Invitation to Learning. By Huntington Cairns, Allen Tate, and Mark Van Doren. New Home Library (Garden City Publishing Co.).

Discussions, originally C.B.S. broadcasts, of twenty-seven of the greatest books of all time: what they are about, why they have endured, why they may continue to influence mankind.

What's Your Name? By Louis Adamic. Harper. \$2.50.

The author of *From Many Lands* and *My America* discusses the problem of America's foreign-born and their children who bear foreign-sounding names. Is it wise to change the name, to spell it simply? He gives emphasis and meaning to his problem by repeating poignant human stories of serious or funny experiences of people whom he knows.

Frank Norris: A Study. By Ernest Marchand. Stanford University Press. \$3.00.

Professor Marchand has made a critical study of Frank Norris' works, his relation to the writers of his time, and the influences which moved him to write of contemporary life as he did. He also evaluates Norris' effect upon the literature which followed his own writing.

Sabotage! Here and Now: The Secret War against America. By Michael Sayers and Albert E. Kahn. Harper. \$2.50.

Many readers feel that no book of greater importance than this can be published just now. It uncovers sensational techniques, plans, and the amazing psychological and physical success of Nazi and Japanese spies in directing destructive schemes. How to fight this sabotage, how to keep up production and morale, are problems fully discussed. This secret war against America is terribly effective, and few people dream of its dangers to our existence.

The Great Offensive. By Max Werner. Translated by Heinz and Ruth Norden. Viking. \$3.00.

Max Werner's experiences have well fitted him to write of these military facts, comprising a history of the war since the entrance of the United States and the Soviet Union. He discusses the necessary conditions for a victorious offensive—of coalition warfare, of meshing together the special tasks of each of the Allied armies, fleets, and air corps. His earlier predictions have proved surprisingly correct.

G.B.S.: A Full-Length Portrait. By Hesketh Pearson. Harper. \$3.75.

Help from Shaw and many of his old personal friends, with access to unpublished correspondence, have given the author an excellent opportunity to write a fascinating biography of Shaw.

No Day of Triumph. By J. Saunders Redding. Harper. \$3.00.

The University of North Carolina invited Mr. Redding to explore thoroughly Negro life of the whole South. Illustrated by many very human stories, the book is a disturbing record of a very real problem. On the whole, Mr. Redding is hopeful of a better and necessary adjustment of relations between the Negroes and other races in the United States.

The Wisconsin: River of a Thousand Isles. By August Derleth. Farrar & Rinehart. \$2.50.

A handsomely illustrated historic study of both state and river.

A Treasury of Great Poems. Edited by Louis Untermeyer. Simon & Schuster. \$3.75.

Readers are familiar with former volumes of poems selected by Untermeyer. This volume ranges from Shakespeare and the King James Version of the Bible to contemporary poets. Something of the lives

and times of the poets is integrated with selections of their poetry.

I Write from Washington. By Marquis Childs. Harper. \$3.00.

That brilliant correspondent, author of *Sweden, the Middle Way*, writes of Washington of the last nine years. This is a social history, with interesting accounts of personalities who have shaped our destinies during these war years and before. Ironical, desperately in earnest, Mr. Childs discusses the functions of government and many of the blunders of the immediate past. He stresses the fundamental soundness of our democracy.

The Mediterranean: Saga of a Sea. By Emil Ludwig. Whittlesey. \$3.75.

As barbarism and civilization again struggle for predominance in the Mediterranean, the author of *The Nile* seeks to tell the history of those peoples whose destiny seems controlled by their proximity to the Mediterranean. Such a tremendous undertaking is necessarily a bit superficial, but he does enable busy readers to renew their acquaintance with the history of Greece and Rome, Judaism and Christianity. "All religions, philosophies, sciences, and arts were born, transformed, disputed, and perfected here."

The Drums of Morning. By Philip Van Doren Stern. Doubleday. \$3.00.

This panorama of the development of the anti-slavery movement, the war which followed, and the life of Jonathan Bradford, hero of the long tale, has as its theme the endless fight between the forces of action and reaction, of good and evil, of man's battle for freedom.

The Changing Indian. Edited by Oliver LaFarge. Oklahoma University Press. \$2.00.

Seventeen of the foremost authorities on the American Indian have offered contributions which are assembled and edited by LaFarge, whose *Laughing Boy* won the Pulitzer Prize. The astonishing fact is that the Indian race is increasing rapidly in numbers.

American Unity and Asia. By Pearl S. Buck. John Day. \$1.25.

Comments on the crisis: the Japanese in America, the Negro, our relations with China, our view of India, and the hope of a world-union of free peoples. This little book is attracting much attention.

The Port of New Orleans. By Harold Sinclair. Doubleday. \$3.50.

In this handsome volume is a very comprehensive history of the growth and development of our most exotic seaport. Entertaining, historically accurate, and enhanced with pictures of fine old buildings.

Retreat to Victory. By Allen A. Michie. Alliance. \$3.00.

Accounts of all the important campaigns of this war since Dunkerque except the Russian-German struggle—with an exhaustive history of the nations concerned and biographical studies of important military commanders. The book is an excellent treatise upon the causes of the war, the price we pay for not being prepared, the price we must continue to pay. Mr. Michie is convinced that the war will eventually be lost—and won—in the Middle East.

The English Novel in Transition. By William F. Frierson. University of Oklahoma Press. \$3.00.

Picking up the dangling threads of the English novel from 1885 to 1940, Mr. Frierson has arranged them into a pattern. He studies beginnings, trends, and influences upon fiction yet to come. Analysis of the methods of the late Victorians is followed by discussions of such authors as Flaubert and his French contemporaries, the Russians, George Gissing and George Moore, on to Joyce, Maugham, Huxley, and younger leaders today.

FOR THE INSTRUCTOR

The Quest for Salvation in an Ancient and a Modern Play. By Maud Bodkin. Oxford University Press.

A critical analysis of the *Eumenides* of Aeschylus and *The Family Reunion* by T. S. Eliot. In both plays the furies appear as both demons of revenge and ministers of a primitive justice. In Eliot's play, however, the salvation is individual and spiritual only, not collective and historical as in the play by Aeschylus. Paper covered.

English Institute Annual, 1947. Edited by Rudolph Kirk. Columbia University Press. \$2.50.

The third *Annual* contains nine critical essays which were read at the third meeting of the English Institute, held at Columbia University in September, 1947. The interpretation of poetry, textual criticism, and bibliography are the main subjects.

The Educational Theories of John Ruskin. By Hilda Boettcher Hagstotz. University of Nebraska Press.

Ruskin's principles of education and his psychological ideas mainly in relation to his educational activities with children. The last chapter is titled "Views on the Education of Women."

Jones Very: Emerson's "Brave Saint." By William Irving Bartlett. Duke University Press. \$3.00.

Jones Very, transcendental poet, of saintly character, has recently attracted the attention of discriminating critics. This biographical and critical study, which contains many of the poems, supports the

tendency to give Jones Very a larger place in American literature.

The Poems of Samuel Johnson. Edited by David Nichol Smith and Edward J. McAdam. Oxford University Press. \$7.50.

This is the first complete collection of Johnson's poems. With excellent format and elaborate scholarly equipment, it may be welcomed as the standard edition.

The Wordsworth Collection: Formed by Cynthia Morgan St. John and Given to Cornell University by Victor Emanuel. A supplement to the catalogue compiled by Leslie Nathan Broughton. Cornell University Press. \$2.00.

The main sections are "Works of Wordsworth," "Works about Wordsworth," and "Manuscripts."

The One Wordsworth. By Mary E. Burton. University of North Carolina Press. \$3.00.

Detailed study of Wordsworth's revision of *The Prelude* refutes the popular opinion that there were two Wordsworths—the one a young radical and good poet, the other an old conservative who tampered with the work of his youth, spoiling the poetry.

The Background of Thomson's Seasons. By Alan Dugald McKillop. University of Minnesota Press. \$2.50.

A detailed study of the references in *The Seasons* to the poet's knowledge of philosophical, scientific, and travel literature.

Terminology and Definitions of Speech Defects. By Mardel Ogilvie. Teachers College, Columbia University. \$3.25.

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A Psychology of Artistic Creation. By Helen Evangeline Rees. Teachers College, Columbia University. \$2.35.

At the end of the first chapter the author summarizes the relationship of art, school, and society: "Life—the good life its goal—democracy its structure—art its essence—the school its agent." This book is a study of the creative process in the arts from the point of view of Gestalt psychology and with regard to the educational value of the arts.

A Dictionary of American English, Part XIV: Outdoors—Pole; Part XV: Pole—Record; and Part XVI: Recorder—Schoolhouse Preacher. Compiled under the editorship of Sir William A. Craigie and James R. Hulbert. University of Chicago Press. \$4.00 each.

Catalogue of Reprints in Series, Supplement, June, 1942. Compiled by Robert M. Orton. Wilson.

In addition to titles which did not appear in the 1941 *Catalogue*, the *Supplement* contains a new section of "Juveniles" available in popular reprint series.

FOR THE STUDENT

Readings for Composition. Edited by Donald Davidson and Sidney Erwin Glenn. Scribner's.

Prose models, chosen mainly from American sources, arranged to exhibit the principles and techniques of composition which are taught in freshman courses. A special section is devoted to problems of vocabulary, usage, and style, and adequate space is given to the research paper. Most of the selections are brief, two to six pages. Both contemporary and older authors are included.

Outline and Manual of World Literature, Book I: Ancient and Medieval; Book II: Modern. By A. G. Alexander. St. Louis, Mo.: John S. Swift Co.

Cultural background and relevant national history, influential ideas, literary types, major authors, and literary works are concisely presented. The exposition begins with the Chaldean *Epic of Creation* and ends with Mrs. Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*. Each volume is neatly planographed on large, double-column pages.

What To Read in English Literature. By Jack R. Crawford. New Home Library (Garden City Publishing Co.).

An introduction to English authors, presented chronologically, to the end of the nineteenth century. The principal works are listed (their contents briefly described) together with commonly available biographical and critical studies. An inexpensive, plainly printed reader's guide.

Nelson's College Caravan: Models of Exposition, Drama, and Poetry, Short Stories, Biography. By Arthur Palmer Hudson, Leonard Burwell Hurley, and Joseph Deadrick Clark. 3d ed. Nelson. \$2.75.

Four volumes, totaling more than a thousand pages, in one: (I) "Models of Exposition," containing selections from fifteen different types and a section on paragraphs; (II) "Drama, Poetry"; (III) "Short Stories"; and (IV) "Biography."

The College Survey of English Literature. Edited by B. J. Whiting, Fred B. Millett, Alexander M. Witherspoon, Odell Shepard, Arthur Palmer Hudson, Edward Wagenknecht, and Louis Untermeyer. 2 vols. Harcourt, Brace. \$3.25 each.

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All the features of the two-volume edition are retained except the larger number of selections. The *Shorter Edition* runs to thirteen hundred pages.

The Complete Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare. Edited by William Allan Neilson and Charles Jarvis Hill. Houghton Mifflin. \$5.00.

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Writers of the Western World. Edited by Addison Hibbard. Houghton Mifflin. \$4.75.

The general movement of this anthology is from the major Greek writers to experimental writers of the last generation, but the principle of division is "the great moods or tempers to which man is heir": "The Temper of Classicism," "The Romantic Mood" ("The Romantics" and "The Symbolists"), and "The Realistic Temper" ("Realists," "Naturalists," "Impressionists," and "Expressionists"). Mr. Hibbard stresses few national literatures—Greek, French, English, and American—rather than many. In format and printing the book resembles the "New Cambridge" Shakespeare. Illustrated by photographs.

Thus Be It Ever. Edited by Clara A. Molendyk and Captain Benjamin C. Edwards. Harper. \$1.60.

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The Latin Key to Better English. By Archibald Hart and F. Arnold Lejeune. Dutton. \$2.00.

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